

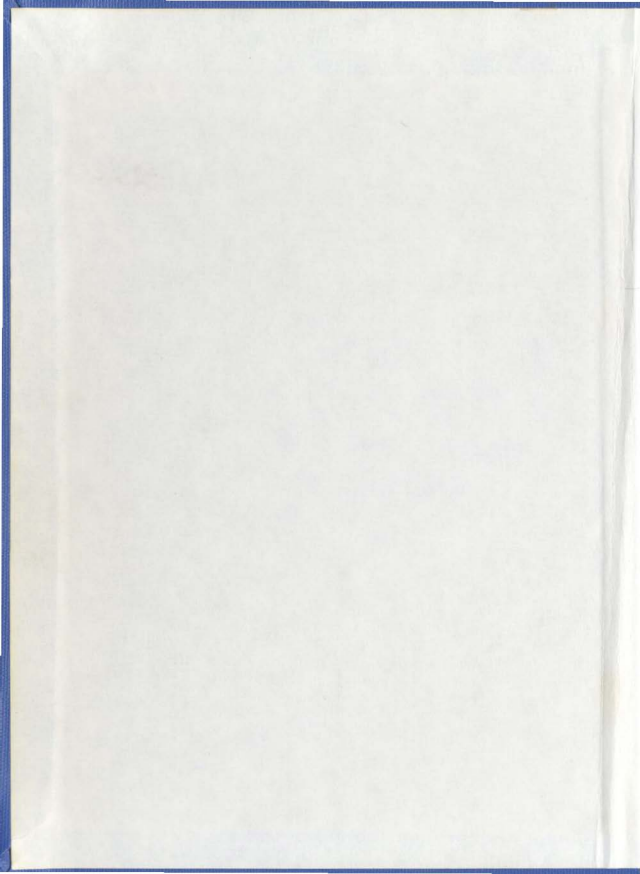
THE PLACE OF BURIAL:
SPATIAL FOCUS OF CONTACT
OF THE LIVING WITH THE
DEAD IN EASTERN AREAS OF
THE AVALON PENINSULA
OF NEWFOUNDLAND

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THE PLACE OF BURIAL: SPATIAL FOCUS OF CONTACT OF THE
LIVING WITH THE DEAD IN EASTERN AREAS OF THE AVALON
PENINSULA OF NEWFOUNDLAND

by



Gerald Lewis Pocius, B.S.

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland

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ABSTRACT

The appearance of death in many cultures is met by a series of rituals which removes the dead gradually from a community, lessening the social and psychological disruptiveness of death. After burial, the dead are still considered a part of the community by the living, and at the place of burial the living can express their desire to maintain contact with them through artifactual and customary displays.

Through the use of material in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive, questionnaires and extensive field work in two selected regions of the Avalon Peninsula of eastern Newfoundland, the customary and artifactual contact of the living with the dead is recorded and studied here both synchronically and diachronically.

During the period of early Newfoundland settlement, the living were able to choose the form of contact with the dead at the place of burial. The location of the place of burial in the community and its physical features were all determined by local traditions.

With the arrival of clergymen in the early 1800's, most of the channels of contact became institutionalized, and strict guidelines were followed. The location of new

cemeteries and the orientation of the grave with respect to the cardinal points of the compass were dictated by the church. Professionally-carved gravestones, which were rare before 1800 and were manufactured in England and Ireland, were now increasingly used, and their designs were determined by external specialists. The custom of decorating the surface of the grave, however, was not institutionalized in Newfoundland, and remains today one of the only viable channels through which the living can express their desire to maintain contact with the dead, thus lessening the social and psychological disruption at death.

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The tradition had it that, ah, one of the vessels that came out, y' know, on their way up the bay, and ah, one of the crew died. So they put in to shore and buried him. And, ah, well hence the grave. So they called it the Bay of the Grave, . . . the place where they buried him they called Port of the Grave.

- local legend about Port de
Grave, Conception Bay

What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from . . .

Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,
Every poem an epitaph. And any action
Is a step to the block, to the fire, down the sea's throat
Or to an illegible stone: and that is where we start.
We die with the dying:
See, they depart, and we go with them.
We are born with the dead:
See, they return, and bring us with them.
The moment of the rose and the moment of the yew-tree
Are of equal duration . . .

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

- T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In all cultures, death, as the final rite of passage, is surrounded by a complex of symbols, both actions and words, which make the transition from life to death easier for both the living and the dead. The process of death is met with this complex from the very beginning, from the period of sickness through actual death and preparation of the body for some type of disposal to the final transition, the disposal of the body itself.

When a death occurs, a community must properly rid itself of the body of the deceased member. This body may be placed at a certain figurative or even physical distance from the daily life and work of the people. At one extreme, for example, a culture may believe that the bodies of the dead should be preserved as much as possible. In its preserved state, the body is usually placed in a special, often separate, area. At the other extreme, the culture may expect the body to be destroyed. This gives rise to cremation, or to the exposure of the body to the elements to hasten decomposition. These practices would be the most extreme forms of removal. Between these two

extremes lies the most common form of removal in the West--burial.

Burial as a means for the disposal of the dead has been practiced since early Christian times in the West, stemming largely from Jewish funeral customs.¹ Wealthy Jews were usually buried in above-ground tombs, hewn out of solid rock. Poorer Jews were often simply buried. Early Christians, frequently Jewish converts, were initially buried in the same geographic areas as the Jews.

As persecution grew, separate places for Christian burial were established, and in regions of extreme strife, such as Rome, complexes of underground tombs soon were constructed. As martyrs became numerous, their burial in these tombs gave a sacred quality to the place of burial. Religious services were frequently held in these underground catacombs, where fear from persecution was minimized.

From the outset, Christianity utilized burial as the accepted form of disposal of the dead, and by the beginning of the fourth century, this method was the only form used by the church.

¹For a discussion of early Christian burial practices, and their borrowings from Jewish customs see: Alfred C. Rush, Death and Burial in Christian Antiquity, Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity, No. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1941).

With the disposal of the body in the earth, the physical space above the buried body takes on specific qualities which are related to the very nature of the dead. The attitudes toward the actual physical location of burial are tied closely with the Christian attitude toward the dead. These beliefs have been influenced by many of the tenets of Christian eschatology and a discussion of this eschatology will permit a clearer understanding of practices and beliefs concerning the dead.

Christian eschatology derived initially from many areas of Jewish eschatology that were common during the formation of early Christian communities. Two main bodies of Jews influenced Christians at the time, those from Palestine and those from Greece. These two groups of Jews shaped Christian attitudes toward two main concepts: the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul.²

Jews in Palestine generally believed that man was a unified creature, rather than divided between body and soul. When a person died, according to the Palestinian Jews, his existence virtually ceased. Only at some future date would God bring about the resurrection of the body, and thus renew the dead. Until this resurrection occurred, existence had for all practical purposes ceased. Without

²For a complete discussion of the eschatology of Hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism, and their effects on early Christianity, see: Rush, Death and Burial, pp. 1-90.

the body, the soul could not properly exist. The proper disposal of the body was thus vitally important, since it would be through this body that life would eventually be restored.

Hellenistic Judaism, on the other hand, regarded the future in terms of the immortality of the soul. A human was composed of two main parts, body and soul, and the soul was capable of existing apart from the body after death. The actions of the present life had a direct effect on the future status of the soul. If good were performed in this life, the soul could be assured of reward in the future life. If evil were common, then punishment would result. According to the Greeks, the soul had the power to return to visit the living, and its final destiny was the eventual reunification with the body.

With the development of early Christianity, these two eschatological streams of thought were adopted, producing a somewhat grafted product. In fact, as Geoffrey Rowell has recently pointed out, "many of the tensions inherent in traditional Christian eschatology may be traced to attempts to harmonize these two understandings."³

The connection between the body and soul was described in two divergent theories arising from the

³Geoffrey Rowell, Hell and the Victorians: A Study of Nineteenth Century Theological Controversies Concerning Eternal Punishment and the Future Life (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 20.

division in Judaism at the time.) As Rowell again writes:

According to one theory the individual soul remained in a state of suspended animation, 'slept', until the Last Day when the resurrection took place and it was reunited with its body, which meant, as far as the individual was concerned, that the moment of death and the day of resurrection appeared coincidental. The alternative view held that the soul remained conscious in the intermediate state during which it was almost invariably considered to experience a foretaste of its future destiny.⁴

The blending of these two traditions has always been superficial, especially since these beliefs are somewhat contradictory.⁵

If the soul and body experience a kind of hibernation immediately after death, then the most important facet of Christian eschatological belief is the ultimate resurrection of the body from the dead, and the achievement of happiness in a future state of life. This final resurrection of the body enhances the worth of the body of the deceased, since the body contains the essence of future life.

⁴ Rowell, Hell and the Victorians, p. 21. Much of this controversy stems from the philosophical distinctions between essence and existence.

⁵ Most Christian denominations have attempted to combine these two traditions, but there have been movements, however, that have focused on only one aspect. The Worldwide Church of God, for example, stresses the Palestinian notion of the cessation of all existence until the final resurrection of the body. For a discussion of this view see: Robert L. Kuhn, "Life After Death?" Plain Truth, 40:4 (March 22, 1975), p. 15.

The Hellenistic notion that the soul leaves the body at death de-emphasizes the importance of the body, since the soul is considered a higher level of existence. The soul would eventually be reunited with the body, but this reunification was only a minor act in the future existence of the soul. Immediately after death, the soul would receive eternal reward. Thus, the soul of the newly deceased was honored, not the body.

These two trends promote beliefs in both the separation and affinity of the body and soul after death. Separation promotes respect toward the soul, while affinity promotes respect for the body. Paralleling the Christian eschatological position is a complex of universal beliefs dealing with the dead body. This complex consists of the duality of fear and respect for the dead.

The body, as the physical remains of a community member, is treated with a high degree of honor and respect. Elaborate burial customs, including a wake, are usually observed in order to signify the community's esteem for its departed member. Friends and relatives of the deceased gather to pay their "final respects" to the dead. Conversely, the body is also greatly feared. This attitude arises both from the noticeable physical changes that death has caused, as well as from the belief that the soul of the dead lingers near the body. Elaborate burial rituals must be followed, or possible harm could

7

be caused by the spirit. Spirits of the dead are usually considered as primarily harmful to the living. In fact, it is rare to find a culture where the spirits of the dead are considered as friendly and useful to the living.⁶ Since the spirits of the dead which linger near the body are feared, the body itself is to be feared. Malinowski found that this dual attitude of respect and fear was quite widespread in most cultures, and he found its components quite complex:

... the dominant elements, love of the dead and loathing of the corpse, passionate attachment to the personality still lingering about the body and a shattering fear of the gruesome thing that has been left over, these two elements seem to mingle and play into each other.⁷

These dual attitudes of fear and respect directly parallel the forms that the disposal of the dead body will take.⁸ Related to the attitude of respect is the wish to preserve the body, with fear is the desire for destruction. Malinowski also comments on these attitudes:

⁶ See: C.E. Vulliamy, Immortal Man: A Study of Funeral Customs and Beliefs in Regard to the Nature and Fate of the Soul (London: Methuen and Company, 1926), p. 27.

⁷ Bronislaw Malinowski, "Magic, Science and Religion," in his Magic, Science, Religion and Other Essays (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1954), p. 48.

⁸ Cf. Levi-Strauss' comments concerning bundles of contradictory attitudes and relations in: Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," Journal of American Folklore, 68 (1955), p. 431.

This brings us to perhaps the most important point, the two-fold contradictory tendency, on the one hand to preserve the body, to keep its form intact, or to retain parts of it; on the other hand the desire to be done with it, to put it out of the way, to annihilate it completely.⁹

These emotions of respect and fear of the body parallel the Christian eschatological system concerning the future state of man.

If, according to Palestinian Judaism, body and soul remain joined in anticipation of a resurrection, then the body is worthy of respect and honor. This respect relates not only to the fact that the body is the remaining visible part of a community member. Rather, the body is the object that contains the essence of future existence that will materialize at the final day of resurrection.

Fear of the dead relates strongly to the Hellenistic notion that the soul, the highest form of man, separates from the body at death to achieve a new existence. Since the soul has left the body, the body has no immediate worth. In fact, since the soul has the power to appear anywhere, including on earth, then it is likely that it will linger near the place of former habitation--the body.

A soul normally attains its final state of reward or punishment immediately after death, and has no need

⁹Malinowski, "Magic, Science," p. 49.

to return to earth. If the soul does return, it probably relates to some kind of misfortune on earth. Corrections of these misfortunes frequently involve the causing of harm to the living. The dead body, therefore, should be avoided at the risk of harm from the departed soul.

Two sets of major dualities, one related to Christian eschatology, the other an apparent universal cultural trait, deal with the dead body and the future life of the dead. These two sets of dualities that surround the dead person are closely linked to his place of burial. This close connection is largely due to the concept of contagious magic.¹⁰

The body is placed in the earth, covered, and eventually disintegrates. At the same time, the place of burial is considered to contain the physical portion of the member of the community, in spite of the fact of this disintegration. These physical changes fail to alter behavior towards the dead. Attitudes that were held in relation to the body before burial are now transferred to the site of burial.

When a death occurs within a community, an elaborate system of rites enables the proper transition from

¹⁰ For a discussion of contagious magic, see: James George Frazer, The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion (abridged edition, London: Macmillan and Company, 1929), pp. 37-45. Also see: William Howells, The Heathens: Primitive Man and His Religions (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1948), p. 53.

the community of the living to the community of the dead. Such a complex of rites, which accompany all major life crises, van Gennep has called "rites of passage,"¹¹ and these cushion the abrupt transition from life to death. The disposal of the body cannot simply take place without formality. When death occurs, a major change is evident, and community rituals are needed to lessen the abruptness of this change so that the living member is removed gradually from the social life of the community. Blauner stresses the psychological need to lessen the abruptness of this transition:

Yet the deceased cannot simply be buried as a dead body: The prospect of total exclusion from the social world would be too anxiety-laden for the living, aware of their own eventual fate. The need to keep the dead alive directs societies to construct rituals that celebrate and insure a transition to a new social status, that of spirit, a being now believed to participate in a different realm. Thus, a funeral that combines this status transformation with the act of physical disposal is universal to all societies, and has justly been considered one of the crucial rites de passage.¹²

The contact with the dead does not end with the funeral ceremony. When the body is buried, the dead are still considered as partially connected with the living.

¹¹Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

¹²Robert Blauner, "Death and Social Structure," Psychiatry, 29 (1966), p. 387.

Psychologically, this contact with the buried dead enables the family and community to lessen the social disruption that death has caused. As Blauner again stresses, "The living have not liberated themselves emotionally from many of the recently deceased and therefore need to maintain symbolic interpersonal relations with them."¹³ Once the body has been placed in the ground, these symbolic relations usually center on the place of burial, and a series of rituals now occurs between the community and this physical space of the grave and cemetery. Warner saw that "the grave, with its markings is a place where the living can symbolically maintain and express their intimate relations with the dead."¹⁴ The cemetery, too, provides the same social function. This physical space would

provide a firm and fixed social place, ritually consecrated for this purpose, where the disturbed sentiments of human beings about their loved dead can settle and find peace and certainty.¹⁵

Thus, the entire cultural landscape of the cemetery, containing individual graves, provides a focus for social contact with the dead.

The social disruptiveness of death necessitates maintaining a contact between living and dead so that the

¹³ Blauner, "Death," p. 390.

¹⁴ W. Lloyd Warner, The Living and the Dead (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 286.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 285.

transition from one level of existence to another is gradual rather than abrupt. The contact between the living and dead creates a community of the dead, centered in a specific geographic area--the cemetery. Since attitudes concerning the dead are largely eschatological, this physical area which contains the dead obtains an acknowledged sacredness. The place of burial is considered as sacred space.¹⁶

As long as the social structure is not able to function smoothly with the abrupt disappearance of its members, then contact between the living and the dead will continue. The sacred character of the cemetery depends upon this continued contact. When this contact disappears, the sacred nature of the place of burial also tends to fade. Warner summarizes this point succinctly:

When cemeteries no longer receive fresh burials which continue to tie the emotions of the living to the recently dead and thereby connect the living in a chain of generations to an early ancestry, the graveyards must lose their sacred quality and become objects of historical ritual. The lifetime of individuals and the living meanings of cemeteries are curiously interdependent, for both are dependent on an ascription of sacred meaning bestowed upon them by those who live. The symbols of death say what life is and those of life define what death must be. The meanings of man's fate are forever what he makes them.¹⁷

¹⁶ For a discussion of this concept of sacred space see: Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), pp. 20-65.

¹⁷ Warner, Living and the Dead, p. 320.

Hence, when community members no longer feel a connection with the dead buried in a specific cemetery, it is often neglected. This burial area is now considered in historical rather than in religious terms. Vandalism is more likely to occur in those places where this transition has taken place. Burial markers are no longer connected with community members who are still missed. Rather, markers contain the names of unknown ancestors whose role in the community of the dead, and therefore the community of the living, has disappeared. The sacred space of the cemetery gradually fades.

With the burial of the dead in a physical area, the living are able to maintain a social contact with the dead, focusing on this spatial location. Expressions of love, grief, respect or fear, once expressed directly to the dead body, are now rechanneled to the area where the dead are physically located. The place of burial now becomes the spatial focus of contact between the living and the dead, and this continued contact provides the gradual transition socially from life to death.

In Western societies that bury their dead, six major channels of contact of the living with the dead are connected with the place of burial. These expressive channels range from those which center on the location of the individual dead to those connected with the entire cemetery. Figure 1, on the following page, summarizes

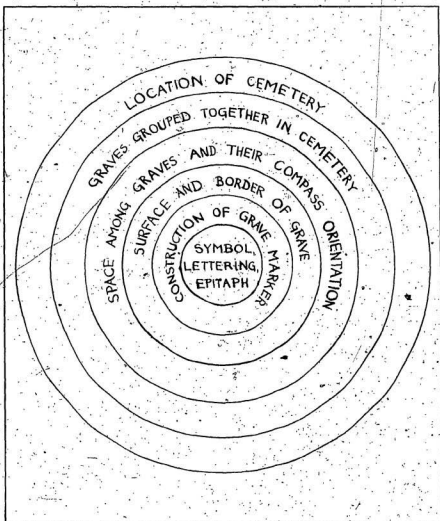


Figure 1. Channels of contact of the living with the dead at the place of burial.

these forms of contact. The six channels are:

1. Location of the cemetery in relation to the community of the living.
2. Grouping of graves together into one geographic unit, the cemetery.
3. Spatial relationship among the graves, including their orientation in relation to the cardinal points of the compass.
4. Decoration of the surface of the individual grave.
5. Construction and placement of the grave marker.
6. Creation of a specific symbol, epitaph or lettering style for the grave marker.

These six levels can be considered within a social spectrum which extends from personal to community, from contact of the immediate family with the deceased to community expression towards the dead. The creation of an epitaph and the erection of a grave marker enables a family to maintain a contact with its own dead. Together, these six levels comprise the place of burial in this study.

Contact with the dead through each of these channels varies according to cultural, historical and religious development. Material objects or geographic spaces are used in each level as the vehicle for contact. In Newfoundland, as these channels have been used, the form and intensity of contact has constantly changed.

This study will examine these levels of contact of the living with the dead in two specific areas of the eastern Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, the forms these levels have taken, and the changes in intensity of contact over some two centuries.

According to this diagram, contact with the dead ranges from individual to community expression; each band represents a different level of expression. Using these levels to examine the contact of the living with the dead can begin at the individual, the center, and proceed outward, or begin with the community, the outer band, and proceed inward. This chronological decision is arbitrary, but in this examination of the place of burial in eastern Newfoundland, investigation will progress from the general to the specific, from the community to the individual. This order places emphasis on the center of the place of burial--the individual grave and the specific ways of marking. The grave provides the spatial focus for the display of individual relationships with the dead in a community, and through the study of these individual displays, a clearer notion of the relationships of the living with the dead in the Newfoundland culture can emerge.

When burial occurs, the placement of some type of physical object on the ground above the body represents a conscious attempt by the living to provide a visual, and often written statement to keep the dead as part of

the community. Without some type of marker, the dead would be removed swiftly from the social structure. Markers are constructed and placed at the location of burial by the living, and therefore permit the living to indicate their continued connection with the dead. This study will concentrate on the common type of burial marker used in eastern Newfoundland--the gravestone.

In this survey of the place of burial, it is clear that the viability of contact of the living with the dead has changed markedly over time in many Newfoundland communities, and these changes will be traced in detail. The wish to keep open the channel of contact of the living with the dead has frequently been institutionalized and codified by specialists, so that external norms have replaced individual and community beliefs and practices. As one level became institutionalized, contact with the dead was still possible through other levels.

The first section of this study will examine the choice of the geographical location of the cemetery within selected communities in eastern Newfoundland. The location of the cemetery was initially chosen by community beliefs and customs which referred to the relationship between the living and the dead, and the duties of the living towards the dead. As churches became established, the physical location of the cemetery within the community soon came under ecclesiastical control.

The actual grouping together of graves into one common geographic area, the cemetery, which is the next level of the diagram, will be discussed next. This practice of using a cemetery indicates that communities apparently feel that all dead belong to one group, now located physically together. The dead share a higher level of existence, they possess similar powers, and must be buried according to specific norms. The belief in the need for burial in consecrated ground may lead to the establishment of a common burial place, or the creation of this area may relate to a desire to remove all dead a certain geographic distance from the community because of their potentially harmful nature. If social and sectarian divisions in life are considered fundamental, then segregation in death will occur, by the establishment of separate cemeteries, or through the complete separation which occurs with the use of single graves scattered through a community. In the Conception Bay area of eastern Newfoundland, for example, religious strife was so divisive in particular communities that burials occurred randomly, while in other regions, the burial patterns indicate cooperation among various ethnic groups.

The relationship among graves, both generally, with regard to orientation according to the cardinal points of the compass, and individually, through the distances indicated by the use of physical markings, will

be discussed in Chapter VI. The orientation of each grave was formerly influenced by local beliefs about the dead, often based on apocryphal Christian traditions. The grave orientation took account of the final state of the dead body, usually its resurrection, and, at times, the actual form that death had taken. If proper orientation were not maintained, some type of harmful action from the dead would be thought to ensue.

The contact of the living with the dead at the place of burial was based not only on the psychological necessity to lessen the abruptness of death, but also out of the belief that the dead had a right to a specific kind of burial and a continued contact with the living after burial. If the living did not follow these rituals regarding death, the dead were believed to have the power to return and cause harm. If community members regard the dead as potentially harmful, then they will carefully bury them in the designated geographic area in the community and mark their graves in order to indicate their continued contact and respect. As the dead are both loved and feared, contact with the dead at the place of burial is necessary in order to prevent the dead from causing harm to the living.

Graves are often marked physically to indicate a definite social or economic position in relation to other graves. These physical markings, as an indication of

these relationships, will also be examined. The enclosure of a plot indicates the presence of a social unit, usually the family, while spaces between plots indicate distances that were present in life.

The fourth level of the diagram, the marking of the border and surface of the grave, will be discussed in Chapter VII. This level represents the most viable aspect of spatial focus of contact of the living with the dead in the communities studied. Where all other levels have become controlled by outside specialists in varying degrees, this level alone remains as the most effective channel of contact for members of the family and community. Grave borders are delineated with a wide range of materials, and the grave surface itself is meticulously decorated. Periods of time are set aside annually when the graves are cleaned, decorated and formally visited. Through these customs, the living can maintain a means of direct contact with a specific community member who is now dead.

The construction of a grave marker with specific shapes and inscriptions to indicate the presence of a particular community member will be examined in Chapter VIII. This construction and placement can be one of the most direct channels for expressing a contact with the dead, and grave markers, such as gravestones, frequently bore witness to both the name of the deceased and also to the person who erected the stone. Contact is expressed from one to the other.

In many cultures, grave markers are constructed by members of the family of the deceased, or by local craftsmen. Through this local construction, the viability of this channel of communication is ensured. Because of the economic and political history of Newfoundland, however, gravestones were made in a culture some three thousand miles away and shipped to the island up until the mid-nineteenth century. These markers, constructed in the British Isles, were products of a somewhat different culture, and could provide only limited contact between the living and dead in Newfoundland. In many cases, these markers were simply indications of social and economic status and prestige.

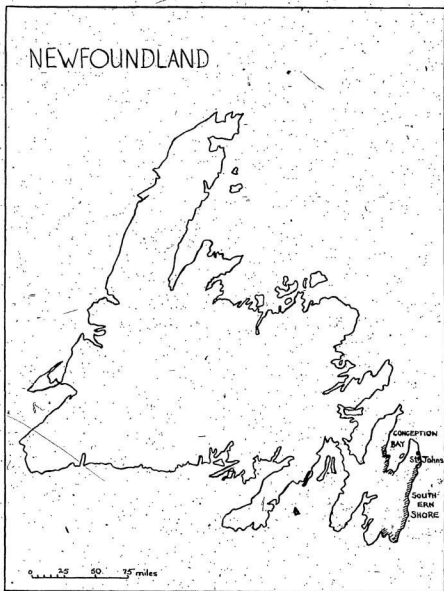
The final band of the diagram deals with the epitaphs, symbols and lettering-styles that are found on the grave marker, and their layout, and these will be discussed in Chapter IX. The grave marker can include statements about the nature of the dead, the future life of the deceased, his previous social and economic status, or the social disruptiveness of death. This level is the most individual and personal, yet, the living in Newfoundland generally had no control over this level, and could not use it for contact with the dead.

Gravestones used in Newfoundland were made initially in England and Ireland, and later in St. John's. The contents of these markers, their epitaphs, symbols

and lettering-styles, were usually obtained not from those who were socially connected with the deceased. Rather, epitaphs, symbols and lettering-styles were obtained largely from printed sources: books, pamphlets and broadsides, and these were chosen usually by specialists, either a clergyman, or the craftsman who made the marker in the British Isles or St. John's. Rarely did the community play a direct role in the creation of an epitaph, symbol, or lettering-style.

Through each of these six levels, this study will examine the nature of contact of the living with the dead in two regions of Newfoundland, the Southern Shore, from Petty Harbour to Trepassey, and the southwestern section of Conception Bay, from Harbour Grace to Holyrood (see Map 1), by concentrating on the material objects and spatial patterns which are used as a visible manifestation of this social and psychological contact. Through both external influences and internal changes, many of these levels have altered since the days of early Newfoundland settlement, and these developments in contact are reflected in artifactual and spatial changes. By concentrating on the artifact and the spatial pattern, attitudinal changes in less tangible behavioral patterns will become evident.

This study will be both diachronic and synchronic. Historical changes over the past two centuries in each of



Map 1. The two regions of field research in Newfoundland.

these six levels will be discussed, as well as the viability of each channel in the present. The flourishing grave-decorating tradition can only be understood in light of the historical changes in the contact of the living with the dead focused on the place of burial. Without the diachronic study, this custom could not be fully understood.

A group of material objects will therefore be discussed both diachronically and synchronically in this study in order to fully understand their cultural significance. This method of studying material objects has apparently not been attempted in the past, certainly not for any region in Newfoundland. An examination of previous material culture studies suggests the need for and the validity of such an approach.

CHAPTER II

AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE STUDY OF MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE MARKINGS OF THE PLACE OF BURIAL

Folklore as a discipline in North America has only begun to study material culture in any systematic way in the past fifteen years, and the number of studies that have been published are still relatively few. These studies have been largely diachronic, and owe their theoretical approach to the development of the discipline as a whole in North America, with its past emphasis on the diachronic study of oral materials. Material culture studies have also been influenced by the research of European folklife scholars.

Although the study of oral material by North American folklorists has been until recently largely diachronic, in the past ten years more and more emphasis has been placed on synchronic studies. The study of artifacts, however, has remained largely diachronic, and most gravestone and cemetery studies utilize this approach.

This chapter will discuss the change in oral folklore studies from a diachronic to a synchronic focus, and then examine the theories which have limited material culture studies to primarily a diachronic approach.

Previous gravestone and cemetery studies will be surveyed so that the limitations of this approach without synchronic material become evident.

Early folklorists in North America looked upon their study as largely focusing on materials which existed in the past; these materials were found in only rare instances in contemporary society. Besides studying the oral traditions of ethnic and racial groups in North America, the founders of the American Folklore Society were interested in collecting "relics of old English Folklore."¹ It was felt that if enough examples of these survivals could be gathered, then historic-geographic studies of this oral material could be conducted.

The early ballad scholars in North America, most notably Francis James Child, were especially interested in diachronic studies of oral material. Many variants of one ballad were examined in order to learn the probable origins of the ballad and its geographic distribution.

Since diachronic studies are historical in perspective, materials that were used in these studies frequently have disappeared from a particular society, or are found only in isolated rural areas. The historical stance of the diachronic study largely focused its

¹"On the Field and Work of a Journal of American Folk-Lore," Journal of American Folklore, 1 (1888), p. 3.

attention on the survivals, usually rural, of customs and traditions which were common during previous centuries.

Diachronic studies necessitated that folklore possess a definite time depth, even over various cultural stages.² When William Thoms coined the term "folklore," he specifically mentioned the study of "manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs, etc., of the older time"³ as its domain.

By the 1960's, many younger folklorists in North America had turned away from a diachronic approach to the study of oral folklore, intent on refocusing the discipline on more synchronic studies. Drawing heavily on other disciplines such as linguistics, anthropology and communications, this new school of folklorists insisted on studying materials and events that existed solely in the present.

The historical emphasis in diachronic studies had led to a concentration on materials that were slowly disappearing. This "devolutionary theory" of folklore was clearly disputed in an article written in 1969 by Alan

²For a discussion of this time depth factor and its relation to cultural evolutionism see: Dan Ben-Amos, "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context," in Americo Paredes and Richard Bauman, eds., Toward New Perspectives in Folklore, American Folklore Society Bibliographical and Special Series, Volume 23 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), pp. 7-8.

³William Thoms, "Folklore," in Alan Dundes, ed., The Study of Folklore (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 5.

Dundes, signalling the shift that was taking place in the increasing number of studies of materials existing in the present.

Diachronic folklore studies were based largely on the assumption that the golden age of folklore existed sometime in the past, and only in isolated areas could survivals from this golden age be found. When items of folklore were collected, the oldest version was always the most desirable and authentic, and it was usually the oldest members of a community who were interviewed. Dundes clearly saw the main assumption of this devolutionary theory:

The view, still widely held, is that as all the peoples of the world achieve civilized status, there will be less and less folklore left until one day it will disappear altogether.⁴

If folklore is not considered as survivals in isolated areas, then presumably it must exist in all areas and at all levels of society.

Dundes and other members of the new breed of folklorists began to redefine folklore in terms of events rather than items, artistic communication rather than texts. This emphasis promoted synchronic rather than diachronic studies, and, as D.K. Wilgus has recently pointed out, "survival" became a word scorned by modern

⁴ Alan Dundes, "The Devolutionary Premise in Folklore Theory," Journal of the Folklore Institute, 6 (1969), p. 13.

folklorists.⁵ Oral folklore studies, especially in North America, had changed from an almost completely diachronic to synchronic emphasis.

During the 1960's, when oral folklore studies were witnessing a total shift in focus from diachronic to synchronic, another major change was taking place within the discipline. The study of material culture, long neglected by folklorists, gradually began to be accepted. This neglect was due partially to the diachronic emphasis of previous folklore research, and partly to the dual nature of the discipline.

Folklore is a relatively young discipline, and is largely a product of two other academic disciplines-- literature and anthropology. Scholars from both fields have shaped the direction and scope of folklore studies, and their influence largely accounts for the fact that the study of material culture has been neglected until recently by folklorists. Only in the past ten years, when folklore as a discipline has become well established, have folklorists been able to begin to investigate topics such as material culture which have long been studied by European folklife scholars.

By the end of the nineteenth century, literary scholars and anthropologists were studying the oral aspects

⁵D.K. Wilgus, "The Text is the Thing'," Journal of American Folklore, 86 (1973), p. 244.

of culture as folklore, but each from a different viewpoint. Anthropologists studied the oral narratives of a people as only one aspect of an entire culture. Literary scholars, on the other hand, looked at oral narratives almost exclusively, with little regard to the cultural context. As a recent article points out:

The literary folklorist's focus of attention was on the verbal text, and the methods and principles of literary analysis provided the means for aesthetic examination and judgement In short, literary scholars with a bent toward folklore were inclined to reduce a folklore performance to a written, verbal text and to pass judgement on the aesthetic merits of that text using as their guidelines literary principles of poetic and prose composition.⁶

This dual nature of folklore as a discipline is readily evident in the history of the American Folklore Society. Articles appearing in the Society's journal have been written by both literary scholars and anthropologists, and several folklorists have recently commented about what was referred to as the "schizoid nature" of the Society:

It [The American Folklore Society] has been held together by a common focus on the tale, on the ballad, on the nature of the relationship of myth and ritual, on the nature of custom (although in anthropological theory, custom is the province of ethnology), and the process of dissemination or diffusion.⁷

⁶Thomas A. Burns, "Aesthetic Judgement: The Interpretive Side of the Structure of Performance," Keystone Folklore, 19 (1974), pp. 61-62.

⁷William N. Fenton and others, "Report of the American Folklore Society to the Commission on Humanities," Journal of American Folklore Supplement, April 1964, p. 26.

Common topics united the two fields of anthropology and literary scholarship, though the theoretical basis for their studies was different.

Anthropological and literary folklorists in the past have stressed the oral nature of the materials they have studied, and have used this criterion to determine which items were folklore. Literary scholars have focused primarily on oral material, and anthropologists, too, have been insistent on this oral nature of folklore. But, as Dundes has shown, the anthropologist does not really neglect the other aspects of culture.

The reason for the position taken by American anthropological folklorists is that from their perspective, folklore is just one of the many aspects of culture. Music is another (and those who study it are ethnomusicologists rather than folklorists). Art is still another.⁸

The anthropologist balanced the study of a culture's oral literature with studies of its art, music, material objects, religious and political systems, and many other aspects. To the anthropologist, however, these studies did not take place within the American Folklore Society. The study of folklore, i.e., oral narratives, was the sole focus of the Society.

The study of material culture by folklorists became acceptable largely through contact with European folklife

⁸ Alan Dundes, "The American Concept of Folklore," Journal of the Folklore Institute, 3 (1966), p. 236.

studies, and through the efforts of Don Yoder at the University of Pennsylvania and Warren Roberts at Indiana University. Both scholars had previous contact with European folklife research, Roberts through a year of study in Norway in 1959-60, and Yoder through his work in Germany on migrations to Pennsylvania.

Folklife studies began primarily in Continental Europe and Scandinavia during the nineteenth century. Studies were primarily regional in focus, and used the concepts and methodologies of ethnology. In one of the earliest articles published on the subject by Sigurd Erixon, the ethnological nature of folklife studies was outlined. In fact, he referred to this discipline as "Regional European Ethnology" and stated that "European ethnology and its more locally restricted sections have to be regarded simply as branches of general ethnology."⁹ Folklife studies in Europe initially concentrated on the rural areas of society and the cultural life in these areas. Material objects were studied, usually diachronically, tracing the historic-geographic distribution of an

⁹ Sigurd Erixon, "Regional European Ethnology," *Folkliv*, 1937:2/3, p. 94; for a brief history of folklife studies by one institution in Germany see: Gerhard Heilfurth, "The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde: Its History, Significance and Objectives," *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, 5 (1968), pp. 241-248; for a recent statement on the goals and objectives of European folklife studies, see: Alexander Fenton, "The Scope of Regional Ethnology," *Folk Life*, 11 (1973), pp. 4-14.

object.¹⁰

Warren Roberts taught the first graduate course in material culture in North America at Indiana University in 1963, and Don Yoder began to study a broad range of topics, including material culture, in his work with the Pennsylvania Folklife Society. Yoder published an article in 1963 which discussed the applications of this folklife approach to the study of traditions in Pennsylvania. He wrote:

... folklife studies involves the analysis of a folk-culture in its entirety.

By folk culture is meant in this case the lower (traditional or "folk" levels) of a literate Western (European or American) society. Folk culture is traditional culture, bound by tradition, and is basically (although not exclusively) rural and pre-industrial. Obviously it is the opposite of the mass-produced, mechanized popular culture of the 20th Century.¹¹

¹⁰ For examples of European studies using this approach, see: Sigurd Erixon, "The North-European Technique of Corner Timbering," *Folkliv*, 1937:1, pp. 13-63; Paul Geiger and Richard Weiss, "Aus dem Atlas der schweizerischen Volkskunde," *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde*, 43, (1946), pp. 221-271; Wolfgang Jacobett, "Jochgeschnitz und Spanntiergrenze," *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*, 3 (1957), pp. 119-144. For a North American study using this approach see: Fred B. Kniffen and Henry Glassie, "Building in Wood in the Eastern United States: A Time-Place Perspective," *Geographical Review*, 56 (1966), pp. 40-66. For the use of this methodology in folksong scholarship, see: W. Edson Richmond, "The Comparative Approach: Its Aims, Techniques, and Limitations," in Mody C. Boatright, Wilson M. Hudson and Allen Maxwell, eds., *A Good Tale and a Bonnie Tune, Publications of the Texas Folklore Society*, No. 32 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1964), pp. 217-237.

¹¹ Don Yoder, "The Folklife Studies Movement," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, 13 (1963), p. 43. This article was

Yoder's comments about the geographic areas of interest to the folklife scholar--rural and pre-industrial cultures--resemble quite closely the views held by the early folklorists who studied oral materials. With emphasis on historical studies, a time depth factor must be present in the material investigated. The most fruitful cultures for such studies are those which are rural and largely uninfluenced by twentieth century technology and communication. This diachronic emphasis of European material culture studies was brought to North America, and was introduced into the major graduate programs which were training folklorists. It was not until 1968, however, when Henry Glassie wrote a general introduction to material culture studies in the eastern United States as his Ph.D. thesis at the University of Pennsylvania, that a full-length study of material objects conducted by a folklorist in North America appeared. Like much of earlier oral folklore scholarship, Glassie's study was largely diachronic and geographic.

At the outset of his study, Glassie discusses the concept of material culture, and points out that "material culture" embraces those segments of human learning which

reprinted without footnotes as "Folklife" in: Tristram P. Coffin, ed., Our Living Traditions: An Introduction to American Folklore (New York and London: Basic Books, 1968), pp. 47-57.

provide a person with plans, methods, and reasons for producing things which can be seen and touched."¹² Glassie claims that the folklorist is interested in material folk culture, and he clearly defines his concept of "folk" which determines the type of objects that folklorists should study:

Something which can be modified by 'folk' is traditional. To be traditional it must be old and acceptable to the individual or group which produced it - old enough for there to be a record of its past in the producer's culture, such as early reports in print or extant datable items, or (to apply a better test) old enough for the producer to consider it old - 'old timey', 'old fashioned'.¹³

The objects to be studied must possess a definite time depth element which is clearly recognizable.

Material culture that the folklorist will study is found basically in the same areas where earlier folklorists collected oral materials, i.e., geographically isolated regions, and these items are fast disappearing. As Glassie claims, "there is little place for material folk culture in our world. It cannot last."¹⁴ And later, "But daily, there is less to study and the answers become

¹² Henry Glassie, Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States, University of Pennsylvania Monographs in Folklore and Folklife, No. 1 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), p. 2.

¹³ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 237.

more difficult to obtain."¹⁵

Glassie's study of material objects grows largely from his conception of "folk." The diachronic nature of much of his study not only adds this time depth factor to any object studied by folklorists, but also leads to the view, once held by many folklorists studying oral materials, that objects that are studied are constructed with a certain purity, uninfluenced by popular or academic trends.

Although objects should not be influenced by "weeklies with broad circulation and technical journals,"¹⁶ Glassie realizes that "a perusal of contemporary builders' manuals and the periodicals of the agricultural improvement societies may reveal that a house built in 1832 which appears quite folk today was, when new, a modish dwelling."¹⁷ In the light of these apparent contradictions, he spells out definite guidelines for study:

An object folk in form or construction is in itself at least partially folk; an object which was not folk when it was produced cannot become folk by usage or association, and a folk-produced object does not lose its folk status when utilized in a nonfolk manner.¹⁸

¹⁵Glassie, Pattern, p. 238.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 11-12.

Glassie's model contains inevitable contradictions, although he does not clearly state this. Using these concepts, synchronic studies must ultimately deal with objects "folk" in form or construction. Objects which are folk in form obviously possess a certain time depth quality. Objects which are folk in construction have apparently been created by rural craftsmen, using designs from a folk, rather than a popular or elite tradition.

Although Glassie's study briefly mentions the possibility of synchronic analysis, it concentrates largely on historical items found as survivals in rural areas. His small section on material culture in an urban environment clearly indicates his emphasis, and he later states that "material folk culture . . . thrives less well in an urban environment than oral traditions do."¹⁹

Another major study by a folklorist of material culture in North America was completed in 1969 when Michael Owen Jones wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on chair-making and chairmakers in Kentucky.²⁰

¹⁹Glassie, Pattern, p. 216.

²⁰See: Michael Owen Jones, "Chairmaking in Appalachia: A Study of Style and Creative Imagination in American Folk Art," Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1969. Portions of Jones' thesis have been revised and printed as the following articles: "The Concept of 'Aesthetic' in the Traditional Arts," Western Folklore, 30 (1971), pp. 77-104; "'For Myself I Like a Decent Plain-Made Chair': The Concept of Taste and the Traditional Art in America," Western Folklore, 31 (1972), pp. 27-52; "'I Bet That's His Trademark': Anonymity" in 'Folk'

In the opening sections of his thesis, Jones recognizes that the concept of "folk" has been broadened by recent theories, especially those of Dundes,²¹ and that a more synchronic approach to the study of folklore was becoming widespread. While realizing that many of these new concepts had been beneficial in advancing folklore scholarship, Jones felt that material objects studied by the folklorist should still possess a certain time depth dimension, what he calls "tradition." In spite of this claim, he does not define this concept, and only through inference can its nature be partially discerned.

In his study, Jones is very much interested in the influences of commercial and educated sources on the creation of material objects by craftsmen in an isolated "folk" society. As he states in his opening section:

The interaction between folk and popular culture in the material arts is as important as, but less studied than the reciprocal relationship between folksong and the broadside or commercial recordings,

Utilitarian Art Production," Keystone Folklore Quarterly, 16 (1971), pp. 39-48; "'If You Make a Simple Thing, You Gotta Sell It At a Simple Price': Folk Art Production as a Business," Kentucky Folklore Record, 17 (1971), pp. 73-77; 18 (1972), pp. 5-12, 31-40; "There's Gotta Be New Designs Once in Awhile': Culture Change and 'Folk' Arts," Southern Folklore Quarterly, 36 (1972), pp. 43-60; "They Made Them for the Lasting Part': A 'Folk' Typology of Traditional Furniture Makers," Southern Folklore Quarterly, 35 (1971), pp. 44-61.

²¹See: Dundes, "American Concept," p. 232.

or the influence of folk legend and tale on the development of American literature and the influence of print on the oral narrative tradition, or the elements of folk belief and practice found in professional medicine until late in the nineteenth century and the influence of professional medical theories on folk notions of disease etiology and treatment.²²

The study of this interaction takes up a large section of Jones' thesis, and in spite of his use of the criterion of tradition, much of his study is synchronic. Jones studies the aesthetics of specific craftsmen, their choice of materials, and sources of designs. He has largely adopted the synchronic emphasis that has dominated oral folklore studies in North America in the past ten years, while still working in rural isolated regions where so much of previous folklore field work took place.

The study of material culture by folklorists must combine both diachronic and synchronic approaches, as other disciplines such as linguistics have already realized,²³ in order to fully understand the cultural use of an object. In his study of viticulture in France, de Rohan-Csermak clearly points to this need:

This series of changes [in viticulture] reveals its own structure: a complex of consecutive transformations structured in a diachronic direction where one element of modernization involves another, and a stage of modification prepares the place for the

²² Jones, "Chairmaking," p. 9.

²³ For example, see: Charles F. Hockett, *The State of the Art, Janua Linguarum, Studia Memoriae Nicolai van Wijk Dedicata*, LXXIII (The Hague: Mouton, 1968).

following one. This entirety presents a vertical dynamic structure, juxtaposed to a synchronic one which is in fact a horizontal dynamic structure. No analysis of material culture could be complete if it did not comply with these two dimensions of processes.²⁴

The synchronic study of an artifact cannot be complete until the diachronic use and development of that object is evident. This study of burial markings in eastern Newfoundland will point out the necessity of combining these two approaches.

A synchronic emphasis will enable folklorists to study objects which have been neglected because of the rural and time depth bias in past material culture studies. Objects that have been overlooked because of this previous diachronic emphasis should receive proper attention. The synchronic study of oral materials in new subject areas has not been accompanied by the study of material objects in the same areas.

In 1970, for example, a special issue of the Journal of American Folklore²⁵ was devoted exclusively to urban materials, and was later reprinted.²⁶ A series of

²⁴ G. de Rohan-Csermak, "Structural Analysis in Material Culture," in Samir K. Ghosh, ed., Man, Language and Society: Contributions to the Sociology of Language (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), p. 205.

²⁵ Journal of American Folklore, 83:328 (1970).

²⁶ Americo Paredes and Ellen J. Stekert, The Urban Experience and Folk Tradition, American Folklore Society Bibliographical and Special Series, Volume 22 (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1971).

articles indicated the amount of material that had been neglected by folklorists with a diachronic and rural approach. There is little mention, however, of the study of material culture in this issue,²⁷ and the nineteen page bibliography at the end contains only three references which deal with material culture.²⁸ No mention is made, for example, of numerous studies which could be made by folklorists on the proxemics of urban housing or the use of commercially produced items for home decoration.²⁹

Synchronic studies will also eliminate the need to define objects according to a special type of construction, such as made by hand. The term "craftsman" can be broadened to include any worker who produces objects, no matter what type of machinery is used. The skill of production workers, for example, can be studied, and as a recent article pointed out:

... a skilled tool-and-die maker is capable of receiving minimal instruction from a manufacturing engineer, who may simply state that he needs a fixture to assemble some parts. From this instruction

²⁷Only one paragraph specifically discusses artifacts in an urban context. See: Richard M. Dorson, "Is There a Folk in the City?" in Paredes and Stokert, Urban Experience, pp. 190-191.

²⁸Ibid., p. 46.

²⁹For a list of works which suggest future directions for the study of urban housing proxemics see: William C. Miller, Factors and Forces Influential to Architectural Design: A Bibliography, Council of Planning Librarians, Exchange Bibliography No. 124 (Monticello, Illinois: Council of Planning Librarians, 1970).

the tool-and-die maker can mentally design the fixture, and, without drawings, select and work the necessary raw materials into a finished, complex product. Required is a high level of skill, including a knowledge of metallurgy and manufacturing processes and the ability to operate a variety of metal-working machinery.³⁰

The learning of these skills and their execution should interest the folklorist as much as those of the blacksmith or carpenter. Even in rural areas where studies have been conducted, a bias will be corrected. For along with the patchwork quilt or the hand-made chair, the folklorist will now include the kerosene lamp and the porcelain figures on the mantle--and the mantle itself--as part of the material culture of the region.³¹

Studies of the place of burial, its location, markings, and role in the life of the living have also displayed this diachronic bias evident in previous investigations of material objects. Emphasis has frequently

³⁰ Bruce E. Nickerson, "Is There a Folk in the Factory?", Journal of American Folklore, 87 (1974), p. 134.

³¹ For an early survey which suggested that folklorists should investigate all aspects of material culture see: Austin E. Pife, "Folklore of Material Culture on the Rocky Mountain Frontier," Arizona Quarterly, 13 (1957), pp. 101-110; for a recent statement with a similar theme see: James F. Deetz, "Archaeology as a Social Science," in Mark P. Leone, ed., Contemporary Archaeology: A Guide to Theory and Contributions (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), pp. 108-117; also see: James Deetz, "Must Archaeologists Dig?", in his Man's Imprint from the Past: Readings in the Methods of Archaeology (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), pp. 2-9.

been placed on the historical changes over time, often in cultures which no longer exist, such as that of Puritan colonial New England. A survey of these inquiries will point out their inadequacies, while suggesting a more complete approach to the study of the place of burial. Research in both the New World and the British Isles will be discussed, since Newfoundland, while a colony in the New World, was strongly influenced by English and Irish traditions.

Many previous examinations have dealt with only one aspect of the place of burial--the marking of this space with a gravestone. This atomistic emphasis in previous studies on gravestones, together with a diachronic methodology, has led to a focusing on this one aspect of contact of the living with the dead, and many studies even fail to mention the other possible channels of contact.

The first gravestone study in England appeared in 1896, during the period which witnessed the general growth of the study of survivals, including folklore. Like a number of works which followed it, William T. Vincent's book, In Search of Gravestones Old and Curious,³² was primarily a diachronic study, concentrating for the most part on material in the Kent area. Vincent quite rightly claimed in the preface that:

³²William Thomas Vincent, In Search of Gravestones Old and Curious (London: Mitchell & Hughes, 1896).

Books about tombs there are many, and volumes of Epitaphs by the hundred. But of the Common Gravestone - the quaint and curious, often grotesque, headstones of the churchyard - there is no record.³³

Vincent's book was largely a descriptive essay, illustrated by his own sketches. He added depth to his study by including material from Ireland, Scotland and continental Europe, but his interests were primarily antiquarian. He rarely commented on the role of the gravestone in the local culture.

It was not until almost fifty years after Vincent's book was published that any extensive research on gravestones would take place again in Britain. During the 1940's, a gravestone carver and designer, Frederick Burgess, began to conduct research on English gravestones from the time of the Romans until the mid nineteenth century. Burgess' approach was purely diachronic, and he viewed the objects that he studied in terms of formal and stylistic analysis, without mentioning their cultural significance. He began publishing much of his research in Monumental Journal,³⁴ a monthly produced for gravestone

³³Vincent, In Search of Gravestones, p. [vii].

³⁴Monumental Journal contains a wealth of information dealing with the history and distribution of various types of gravestones, primarily in England. These articles are largely unknown, and unfortunately this journal is located in only two libraries in the United States and four in England. It ceased publication in 1968.

carvers, or monumental masons, in Britain. Burgess' articles on "English Sepulchral Monuments" began to appear in the early 1940's, and continued until his death in 1967. A summary of his twenty years of research was published in 1963, entitled English Churchyard Memorials,³⁵ and Burgess condensed and reduced drastically the information contained in his articles that appeared in Monumental Journal for over twenty years.

English Churchyard Memorials is devoted largely to a historical survey of monuments used in England from Pre-historic to Post-Reformation times. The strength of Burgess' study, however, lies with the section of his book devoted to the designs of monuments. In separate sections dealing with symbolism, ornamentation, lettering and epitaphs, he examines a wide range of printed sources which were used by craftsmen in their trade. His careful research of both primary and secondary materials did much to destroy the notion that gravestone designs were largely the creation of local craftsmen.

In spite of this research, Burgess' book suffers from its diachronic emphasis, with little or no comment about the actual reasons why a gravemaker was purchased, the desire on the part of the churches to control designs, or the role of the marker in the total spatial context of

³⁵ Frederick Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials (London: Lutterworth Press, 1963).

the living with the dead. Although separated by a time span of over fifty years, English Churchyard Memorials did not mark a great advance in the understanding of the cultural use of the gravestone over Vincent's study.

The only other full-length study of gravestones in Great Britain appeared two years after Burgess' book. Of Graves and Epitaphs³⁶ was written by an art teacher at Swindon College of Art, Kenneth Lindley. This book is largely a popular work, and lacks even the historical scholarship which made Burgess' book partially useful. By making a wide audience aware of the fact that a gravestone is a local artifact, Lindley's book may lead to the preservation of specific churchyard memorials, one of the few strengths of this study.³⁷

Like studies in Great Britain, early gravestone research in North America has been largely diachronic and antiquarian. North American studies are also few in number, and tend to concentrate geographically on New England materials, which are the oldest and contain the most elaborate decorative styles.

Harriette Merrifield Forbes published the first extensive North American gravestone study, dealing with

³⁶Kenneth Lindley, Of Graves and Epitaphs (London: Hutchinson, 1965).

³⁷For other criticisms, see my review in Pioneer America, 7 (1975), in press.

New England examples near Boston, in 1927.³⁸ Forbes' research was exclusively historical, her aim to prove that New England gravestones were carved by local craftsmen, rather than shipped from England as many thought. Her study consisted primarily of biographical sketches of Massachusetts carvers, and only scattered sections of her book comment on the cultural significance of gravestones.

From the early 1920's until the present, many antiquarians in North America have been interested in the study of gravestones. Articles which have been published concentrate solely on the artifact, and are concerned with describing the design of the gravestone, rather than discussing it as a mode of contact with the dead.³⁹ These previous discussions remove the gravestone totally from the burial context, and the connection with other rites of passage dealing with death are rarely mentioned. Art historians, too, have also studied these artifacts from a

³⁸ Harriette Merrifield Forbes, Gravestones of Early New England and the Men Who Made Them, 1653-1800 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927).

³⁹ For examples of these antiquarian studies, see: Wilfred A. Norris, "The Gravestones in the Old Burying Ground at Watertown, Mass., Their Decorative Carving, Lettering and Symbolism," Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Old-Time New England, 16 (1925), pp. 65-74; Wilfred A. Norris, "The Old Burying Ground at Watertown, Mass.," Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Old-Time New England, 16 (1925), pp. 3-9; Eric A. O'D. Taylor, "The Slate Gravestones of New England," Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Old-Time New England, 15 (1924), pp. 58-67.

visual, rather than a cultural viewpoint.⁴⁰

During the past ten years, two major studies of New England gravestones have appeared, and, while both are largely diachronic, they at least attempt to relate Puritan gravestone designs to the wider culture that produced these objects.

Allan Ludwig's study of New England gravestones, Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and its Symbols, 1650-1815,⁴¹ was published in 1966, and it was the first extensive study of this material since Forbes' book appeared in 1927. Ludwig was struck by the elaborateness of the Puritan stonecarving tradition, especially in a culture that had been largely iconophobic. The need to create symbols is present in all cultures, according to Ludwig, and the Puritans were able to fulfill this need only through the creation of elaborately carved gravestones.

In 1974, another study of New England gravestones appeared, focusing on the same basic materials that Ludwig had used. Memorials for Children of Change: The Art of

⁴⁰For examples, see: Ann Parker and Avon Neal, "Archaic Art of New England Gravestones," Art in America, 51 (1963), pp. 96-105; Ann Parker and Avon Neal, "Carvers in Stone," Vermont Life (Fall, 1964), pp. 40-47.

⁴¹Allan I. Ludwig, Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and Its Symbols, 1650-1815 (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1966).

Early New England Stonecarving,⁴² written by Dickran and Ann Tashjian, partially disputed Ludwig's thesis. The Tashjians claimed that the Puritan culture was not totally devoid of symbolic creations, giving examples of Puritan furniture and textiles that contained decorative motifs. Puritan leaders, they point out, permitted the use of symbols if they were derived from Scripture. Gravestones also provided a memorial for future generations of this early attempt to form God's kingdom on earth.

A number of diachronic studies of New England gravestones have been written by two archaeologists, James Deetz and Edwin Dethlefsen. Since 1966, these two scholars have published several articles based on extensive field research throughout New England.⁴³ Influenced largely by their training in archaeology, Deetz and Dethlefsen have concentrated exclusively on the gravestone as artifact, plotting distributions of particular styles and the works

⁴²Dickran and Ann Tashjian, Memorials for Children of Change: The Art of Early New England Stonecarving (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1974).

⁴³For general studies see: Edwin Dethlefsen and James Deetz, "Death's Head, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries," American Antiquity, 31 (1966), pp. 502-510; James Deetz and Edwin N. Dethlefsen, "Some Social Aspects of New England Colonial Mortuary Art," American Antiquity, 36:2, part 2 (July, 1971), pp. 30-38 [issued as Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology, No. 25]; For a collection of student papers written under Deetz's supervision, see: James J.F. Deetz, ed., "Style Change in New England Colonial Gravestone Design," MS. in Peabody Museum, Cambridge, Mass., 1963.

of specific carvers. Seriation studies of gravestone styles have also been conducted,⁴⁴ as well as demographic analysis of data obtained from epitaphs.⁴⁵

In all of the studies by Deetz and Dethlefsen, their diachronic approach and archaeological bias has led to a concentration on the gravestone as artifact, neglecting many aspects of the place of burial. By using the data from gravestones, they attempt to discover cultural trends of the Puritan colonies. While many of their findings are useful, their neglect of many of the channels of contact of the living with the dead makes their work only partially complete.

The studies which have been discussed up to this point have all suffered in varying degrees from this focus on the gravestone. Much of this bias stems from the view that the gravestone is primarily a work of art, rather than an object that plays an important role in a complex cultural ritual. The emphasis on the gravestone as an object for study also relates to the Western emphasis on objects, neglecting the spaces between the objects.⁴⁶ Space, as well

⁴⁴ James Deetz and Edwin S. Dethlefsen, "The Doppler Effect and Archaeology: A Consideration of the Spatial Aspects of Seriation," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 21 (1965), pp. 196-206.

⁴⁵ Edwin Dethlefsen and James Deetz, "Eighteenth Century Cemeteries: A Demographic View," Historical Archaeology, 1 (1967), pp. 40-42.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the cultural use of space see: Edward T. Hall, The Hidden Dimension (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1966).

as objects, can express a contact with the dead, such as the placement of the cemetery within a community, or the distance between graves. Until recently, very few studies have been made of the entire cemetery as part of the cultural landscape, and the recent examinations by cultural geographers which focus on this aspect exhibit a predominantly diachronic approach.

One of the earliest studies which examined the entire place of burial appeared in 1858, God's Acre: or, Historical Notices Relating to Churchyards.⁴⁷ Written by Elizabeth Stone, this book discussed many aspects of contact of the living with the dead, covering topics such as burial in consecrated ground, beliefs connected with the churchyard, grave decoration and visitation, and the marking of the individual grave. Stone's study is largely historical, however, and her comments about current customs and practices rarely contain significant insights into their cultural role.

Walter Johnson's book, Byways in British Archaeology, appeared in 1912, and contained several sections which discussed the place of burial.⁴⁸ Johnson's viewpoint was

⁴⁷ Mrs. Elizabeth Stone, God's Acre: or, Historical Notices Relating to Churchyards (London: John W. Parker, 1858).

⁴⁸ Walter Johnson, Byways in British Archaeology (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1912).

largely archaeological, and much of his study deals with artifactual evidence which indicates previous customs. His emphasis on present customs as survivals greatly reduces the amount of synchronic analysis. In spite of these weaknesses, he does point out that the living maintain contact with the dead through the use of space, and his book includes sections which examine grave orientation and beliefs concerning various portions of the graveyard.

Cultural geographers in North America began studying the place of burial as part of the cultural landscape during the second half of the twentieth century, their findings usually based on field research.⁴⁹ Although the early studies were largely diachronic, recent work includes a diachronic-synchronic approach necessary for the complete understanding of this aspect of culture.

Early studies investigated the reasons why cemeteries were initially established. William D. Pattison, for example, studied the cemeteries in the Chicago area,⁵⁰ and found that the demand for accessibility, religious, national and racial segregation all influenced the

⁴⁹For a brief survey of previous studies of the place of burial conducted by cultural geographers see: Fred Kniffen, "Necrogeography in the United States," Geographical Review, 57 (1967), pp. 426-427.

⁵⁰William D. Pattison, "The Cemeteries of Chicago: A Phase of Land Utilization," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 45 (1955), pp. 245-257.

establishment of a cemetery. Larry Price, studying burial areas in southern Illinois, found that social trends affected the size and location of the place of burial.⁵¹

Richard V. Francaviglia published a preliminary study in 1971, which was the first real attempt to investigate the entire place of burial culturally.⁵²

Francaviglia examined five cemeteries in Oregon using a specific approach:

The cemetery is analyzed as a cultural landscape, that is, as a place having definable visual characteristics based on individual forms, such as tombstones, trees, and fences, and on the placement of those forms in a particular spatial arrangement. The cemeteries studied have spatial and chronological variability.⁵³

Francaviglia studied the changes in gravestone styles over time, as well as the changes in the layout and location of the cemetery generally. Unfortunately, he does not extensively discuss the changes in gravestone inscriptions and symbols, nor does he mention customs which the living follow within the cemetery. Although his study lacks a great deal of synchronic material, Francaviglia stresses the

⁵¹ Larry W. Price, "Some Results and Implications of a Cemetery Study," Professional Geographer, 18 (1966), pp. 201-207.

⁵² Richard V. Francaviglia, "The Cemetery as an Evolving Cultural Landscape," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 61 (1971), pp. 501-509.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 502.

atomistic nature of the cultural landscape of the cemetery, containing both objects and spatial patterns. His wholistic concepts have been altered and expanded to produce the visual diagram discussed in the previous chapter. Using this model in a comprehensive diachronic-synchronic study, the extent and viability of the contact of the living with the dead can be adequately examined.

As has already been demonstrated, previous investigations of the place of burial have largely been diachronic, and often focused on the gravestone. This present study will examine both diachronically and synchronically the markings and spatial pattern of the place of burial in eastern Newfoundland, taking note of all levels of the expression of contact of the living with the dead. The viability of particular channels of contact can be understood through an awareness of the historical changes that have taken place in all levels. As the materials for this study are drawn from specific regions of eastern Newfoundland and the British Isles, a discussion of the geographic location of these regions as well as fieldwork methodology used in this survey are necessary before each channel of contact can be specifically examined.

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The desire of the living to maintain contact with the dead focuses to a large extent on the place of burial. Customs and rituals are connected with this area; and artifacts and spatial patterns are also used as a means of contact. In many areas of the West, this contact of the living with the dead occurs through at least six channels, which have been discussed in Chapter I. This chapter will discuss the geographic regions where field research for this study was conducted, the reasons why these areas were chosen, the methodology used in field research, and the analytical arrangement of the data.

Material for this study was obtained in three areas in Newfoundland: Pouch Cove, the Southern Shore and the Conception Bay area. Pouch Cove is a small community fourteen miles north of St. John's; the Southern Shore extends from Petty Harbour to Trepassey; the western portion of Conception Bay was studied, from Harbour Grace to Holyrood. Specific field work was also carried out in Dorset and Devon in England, and in Waterford and Wexford in Ireland. Approximately sixty five people were interviewed during field work, and the information was recorded

on ten reels of five inch tape and approximately three hundred pages of field notes. Besides this written and oral material, approximately seven hundred photographs, were taken in Newfoundland, and one hundred and fifty in England and Ireland.

Research for this study began in September, 1973, as part of an introductory Folklore course taught at Memorial University. This course required a field work project from each student, and I chose to study local gravestone design and distribution. After discovering that cemeteries in St. John's contained too many markers for such a paper, I travelled to the nearby coastal community, Pouch Cove, and found a suitable cemetery for study. At Pouch Cove, I concentrated on the churchyard of the Anglican Church, and my wife and I recorded the thirty eight gravestones that were extant in this churchyard.

In May, 1974, full-time field research on cemeteries and gravestones in Newfoundland began. Initially, I had planned to study all areas of the Avalon Peninsula, but soon realized that this would be a lengthy task. Upon consultation with my former advisor, Dr. David Hufford, I decided to concentrate on two geographic areas, the Southern Shore and the southwestern portion of Conception Bay. This selection was due to two major factors, the early settlement of both regions, and the ethnic composition of these areas.

In these two regions the first attempts at settlement in Newfoundland took place. John Guy's colony was founded at Cupids in 1610, and settlements were established on the Southern Shore in 1617. Although financial backing for these ventures was soon withdrawn, settlers still remained. These regions were settled as early as the New England colonies. Previous studies¹ in the New England area indicated a flourishing stone carving tradition there by the late 1600's, and if a similar tradition existed in Newfoundland, these two geographic regions should contain numerous examples of its style and distribution.

Demographically, these two regions have witnessed the settlement patterns which have characterized many areas of the island, with the two main Newfoundland immigrant groups, English and Irish, settling in both regions.² Both areas were initially settled by West Country fishermen, who were later joined by numbers of Irish from Waterford and Wexford. The Conception Bay area saw the establishment of separate English and Irish communities in many instances, while the Southern Shore gradually became

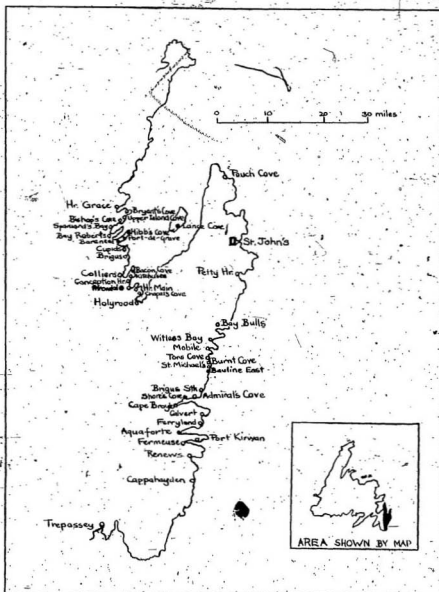
¹ See Chapter II for a discussion of these studies.

² Concentration on these two major immigrant groups therefore excludes the Gaelic tradition of the Codroy Valley, the French tradition of the west coast of the island, and the early French gravestones found in Placentia. For a brief discussion of these markers found at Placentia see: M.F. Howley, The Old Basque Tombstones of Placentia (Ottawa: n.p., 1902).

dominated by the Irish settlers. Many residents today on the Southern Shore have English surnames yet claim an Irish ancestry. This English and Irish ethnic distribution also provides a cross-section along denominational lines. Virtually all the communities on the Southern Shore, with the exception of Aquaforte, are almost completely Roman Catholic. The Conception Bay area, on the other hand, contains communities which are exclusively Protestant, usually Anglican and United Church, while some are divided between Catholic and Protestant, or are totally Catholic.

A total of thirty nine communities was studied during field work, twenty along the Southern Shore, and nineteen in the Conception Bay area.³ Material was recorded from the following communities on the Southern Shore: Petty Harbour, Bay Bulls, Witless Bay, Mobile, Tors Cove, Burnt Cove, St. Michaels, Bauline East, Brigus South, Cape Broyle, Shore's Cove (Cape Broyle), Admiral's Cove (Cape Broyle), Calvert, Ferryland, Aquaforte, Fermeuse, Port Kirwan, Renew's, Cappahayden and Trepassey. The communities that were studied in the Conception Bay area were Lance Cove, Holyrood, Avondale, Chapel's Cove, Harbour Main, Conception Harbour, Kitchuses, Bacon Cove, Colliers, Brigus, Cupids, Port de Grave, Bareneed, Hibb's Cove, Bay Roberts, Spaniard's Bay, Bishop's Cove, Upper Island Cove,

³ See Map 2.



Map 2. Communities where field research was conducted in Newfoundland.

Bryant's Cove and Harbour Grace.

In order that material of a comparative nature be obtained, research was also carried out in England and Ireland during February, 1975. Before this trip to the British Isles, lists were compiled that contained the names of English and Irish stone masons whose gravestones were found in Newfoundland, as well as the places of birth in England and Ireland listed on the gravestones of Newfoundland residents. During field work in the West Country, I stayed at the home of a fellow graduate student's parents, who live in Bridport, Dorset. During the ten days spent in the West Country, I photographed the Anglican churchyards in the Bridport area--those at Bridport, Chideock and Powerstock--because of their accessibility.⁴ A day-long trip was made to Poole, since a gravestone found in Brigus was carved by a Poole mason in the early nineteenth century. Poole's oldest cemetery, known locally as "Hunger Hill" was photographed. On another day, after obtaining the use of a car, the Portland stone quarry was visited, since it was likely that some Newfoundland gravestones were carved from Portland stone. Travel through Devon took place by rail, and towns could only be visited that were on a train route. Two ports on the main route were chosen, Teignmouth and Paignton.

⁴ See Map 3.

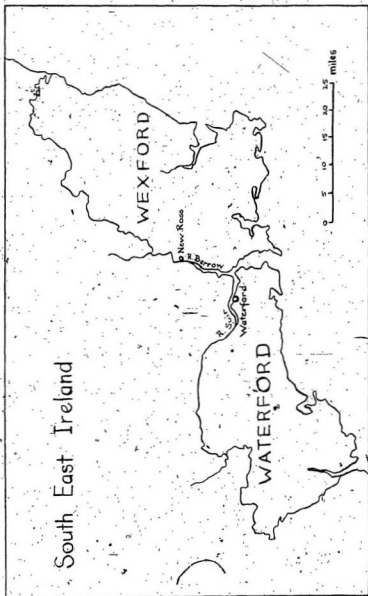
At least one headstone photographed in Newfoundland was carved in Teignmouth, and one of the earliest stones on the island, found in Renewa, marked the grave of a resident from Paignton. During field work in both Dorset and Devon, I quickly discovered that many of the early churchyards had been cleared of gravestones, and it was therefore difficult to find comparative material for the Newfoundland tradition.

I spoke to Dr. John Mannion, of the Department of Geography at Memorial University before going to the British Isles in order to obtain information about field work in southeast Ireland. Dr. Mannion had conducted previous research in this region on early Newfoundland migration patterns, and was familiar with the parishes as well as the areas of greatest emigration to Newfoundland in this region of Ireland. Dr. Mannion suggested that I visit the early cemeteries in the city of Waterford, as well as those in New Ross.⁵

I stayed at Waterford during my field work in Ireland, and four cemeteries in the city were photographed. One day was spent in New Ross; travelling there and back by bus.

During my field work in Waterford, I had asked several residents, including the elderly couple who owned

⁵ See Map 4.



Map 4. Communities where field research was conducted in southern Ireland.

the house where I stayed, where I might find the older cemeteries in the city. After three days, I had visited three cemeteries, but none of them contained markers dated before 1840. On the day that I was scheduled to leave Ireland, the librarian at the Waterford City Library told me of a park near St. John's Alley that was once a cemetery. She claimed that the old gravestones had been placed along the walls of the park. When I arrived at this park, there were no stones, but I noticed an abandoned building, probably a chapel, next to the park. By looking over the locked door through an open tympanum, I saw piles of gravestones on the ground inside the old building. I managed to crawl through the narrow opening, and drop down inside. The gravestones that I found dated from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and many of these types were clearly found in Newfoundland. After photographing several markers, I placed an old park bench against the wall of the chapel interior, and using it as a ladder, climbed to the top of the wall. Since the building had no roof, I pulled myself to the top of the wall, and then jumped down into the park.

The major portion of field research for this study took place between May and September, 1974, in the areas of Conception Bay and the Southern Shore previously outlined. My advisor and I decided in late April, 1974, that the initial contact in each community should be the

clergyman, not only because of his knowledge of the area, but also because of his jurisdiction over the cemeteries. I contacted Dr. Morley Hodder, Head of the Religious Studies Department at Memorial University, in order to obtain a list of names of the clergymen in the communities to be studied. Dr. Hodder provided me with this list, and also wrote letters to each clergyman, introducing and explaining my work. This letter insured that I would have the local clergyman's help in my field work.

*I was also able to obtain the assistance of local residents by another means. In a study dealing with an area of belief such as death, residents may be reluctant to discuss this topic with outsiders like myself who enter the community for only a short period of time. It was advantageous, therefore, to have a less personal topic through which I could make initial contacts in the community. In the spring of 1974, I had received a grant from the National Museum of Man in Ottawa to study the textile traditions of Newfoundland. I conducted this field research also between May and September, 1974, and this provided me with a topic with which I could approach residents for help. Questions about spinning or mat-hooking were not as personal as those concerning death.

From the beginning of June until the end of August, five days a week were usually spent conducting field work on these two topics. Since my wife was working, and

needed transportation to and from her job in St. John's, I visited individual communities during the day, and returned to our home in Portugal Cove at night. I usually arrived in a community around 9:00 a.m. and would leave around 7:00 p.m.

In each community, I first met the clergyman, explained my work, and asked about the location of the burial grounds in his area. After obtaining this information, I looked for a contact who knew about the textile traditions in the community. Sometimes I would ask the clergyman who I might visit, but just as frequently I stopped at the Post Office or a local store and inquired about local contacts. In one case, a woman working at a Post Office where I stopped turned out to be one of my most knowledgeable and cooperative informants, aware of many of the traditions in her community. In some cases, I just began conversations with local residents who were out for a summer's walk, and I quickly steered the conversation in order to obtain the names of potential contacts. In another community, I stopped at a house which had several mats draped over the front fence, and asked the woman if I could photograph them. This woman also turned out to be an excellent contact, and I returned several times to obtain information from her.

When I was sent to see a specific woman, I knocked at the door of the house, although I knew that this

practice was foreign in most communities. When a person answered, I was careful to mention who sent me, in order to alleviate some of the strangeness of my presence, and to give my visit a kind of official sanction by the community member who sent me.

The women that I interviewed were usually over fifty, and I quickly learned that I had to make two things clear early in our conversations--that I was married and that I was an American. I soon realized that an unmarried male interested in talking to women during the day when their husbands were often away, would be viewed with suspicion by local residents. The fact that I was married reduced much of this suspicion. I was sure to wear my wedding ring every day, and early in our initial conversation I would always mention that "my wife and I live at" or that "my wife and I feel that" This would immediately be greeted with, "Oh, you're married," and the conversation often became much more relaxed after my comments.

Many older people, having grown up in pre-Confederation Newfoundland, still feel a certain bitterness at this union,⁶ and feel that they are belittled by

⁶Newfoundland became a part of Canada in 1949. A "Confederation Celebration" was held during 1974, to celebrate Newfoundland's twenty-five years as part of Canada, and bumper stickers proclaiming "Twenty-five Years is Long Enough" were frequently seen in the St. John's area.

the "Canadians." My accent and manners immediately indicated that I was a non-Newfoundlander, and I found it advantageous to mention that I was from "the States" early in our conversation. Many older Newfoundlanders have a high regard for Americans, having lived and worked in the New England area, or having received some type of monetary benefits from the United States military installations that were built in Newfoundland during World War II. I frequently saw photographs of John Kennedy hanging in outport kitchens, and souvenirs from New York or Boston in the front room.

My discussions with residents about the textile traditions in the community were always taped, and when enough information on this topic was obtained, I turned the tape recorder off and packed it away. I was usually asked to stay for a cup of tea, which was often accompanied by cakes, cookies, cheese or sandwiches. If it was near noon, I was frequently invited to stay for lunch. During this period of eating and drinking, the conversation often became more general and relaxed. Near the end of my last cup of tea I would wait for an opportune point in the conversation to mention that I was also studying Newfoundland gravestones. I was careful to stress the historical aspect of this study, rather than the religious and cultural information which these stones might contain.

I was never met with astonishment when the conversation turned to the topic of gravestones and the cemetery, nor did anyone appear reluctant to discuss this topic. Field work for this thesis was relatively easy, and no major problems were encountered. When I entered a community, I had a specific role to discuss, one dealing with material objects. Field research by an outsider on material culture appears less threatening to local residents, since my study dealt with a topic clearly defined and apparently acceptable because of its historical bias. In several cases, local residents insisted on taking me to a local cemetery in order to show me specific markers or graves. In one instance, a man spent over an hour showing me various graves in a cemetery, and during the course of our survey I knelt and prayed with him over the graves of his father and early sweetheart. In Port de Grave I spent almost an hour uprighting a gravestone with the help of two young men who initially suggested the task. During our efforts, several nearby residents came out to watch and help.

When discussing the gravestones in a community, I frequently inquired as to the age of the local gravestones before I had actually seen them. I was told several times that there were stones in the local cemetery going back to the 1500's and 1600's, but the most frequent response was that there were gravestones "a hundred years

old" in the cemetery. This age seems to be a magical number that signifies something that is considered "old," but rarely was this report accurate.⁷ I soon learned that it was necessary to see each stone before I could verify its age. Through the use of specific recording techniques, the information on each stone, and features of the surrounding landscape could be documented.

Field work at Pouch Cove in the fall of 1973, and in the two major research areas during the summer of 1974, dealt largely with the individual cemetery and graves in each community, and concentrated on recording the visual aspects of this cultural landscape. All too frequently in the past, folklorists have dealt only with the oral aspects of culture which could be conveniently converted to the written word, first through the use of notes, and later through the transcription of audio tapes. Although some folklorists claimed that traditions were passed on through oral learning or through imitation, they focused in their field research on only the oral aspects. The almost complete absence of photographs from the Journal of American Folklore or Folklore points to this bias. Learning is both oral and visual, and in a peasant society like

⁷ In a study of half-timber construction in Ohio, Hubert Wilhelm and Michael Miller reported that when they inquired about the age of many buildings, they were frequently told, "It's over a hundred years old"; see: Hubert G.H. Wilhelm and Michael Miller, "Half-Timber Construction: A Relic Building Method in Ohio," Pioneer America, 6:2 (July, 1974), p. 49.

Newfoundland, cultural traditions are both oral and visual. During field work for this study, emphasis was placed on the visual recording of the cemetery, the grave and its markings, primarily through the use of photography.⁸ The basic core of the field work consisted of the photographing of gravestones, and specifically those dating before 1860. This time focus was deemed necessary after the initial study in Pouch Cove.

The examination of the Anglican churchyard in Pouch Cove consisted of an intensive survey recording the visual and spatial aspects of this place of burial. All thirty eight gravestones found in the churchyard, ranging in date from 1845 to 1914, were photographed. It became apparent in this study that during the 1850's white marble gravestones were introduced into Newfoundland. These stones were cheaper than the limestone grave markers used before this decade, and the numbers of gravestones after 1860 increased exorbitantly. In the Pouch Cove study, for example, thirty six of the thirty eight stones were made of white marble, and were dated after 1860.

⁸For an excellent discussion of the use of photography as a field research technique see: John Collier, Jr., Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method, Studies in Anthropological Methods (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967); also see: Oswald Werner, "Ethnographic Photography: A Survey of Photographic Techniques in Anthropological Field Work Including Motion Pictures" (M.A. thesis, Syracuse University, 1961).

The study of the place of burial in Newfoundland, based largely on the gravestone patterns, was to draw on materials from a relatively wide geographic area. From the Pouch Cove study, however, it was obvious that this geographic breadth could not be accompanied by a chronological depth that recorded all gravestones. Such a task would take years of field work. It was decided, therefore, to systematically record all grave markers in each community visited that were dated before 1860. This sample would be supplemented by the Pouch Cove material, and random examples of other gravestones dated after 1860.

Besides the photographing of gravestones, other physical features of the cemetery were recorded. Examples of grave decoration, locally constructed gravestones, the location of the cemetery in the local landscape, the marking of the borders of the cemetery, etc., were all photographed in each community. The recording of gravestones could be quite rigorous, since all stones before 1860 had to be photographed. The recording of these other aspects of the place of burial was obviously more subjective, relying primarily on my visual perceptiveness in each location. During field work,⁹ two cameras were used, a Yashica-D twin-lens reflex, and a Nikon-Ftn, with a 50mm

⁹I would like to thank Dr. Robert Barakat of the Department of Anthropology at Memorial University for his many suggestions concerning field work techniques involving photography.

micro lens. Plus-X film, rated at A.S.A. 125, was used in the Yashica, while Tri-X, rated at A.S.A. 400 was used in the Nikon.

A scale was constructed that would be placed in most photographs in order to give the proper perspective. To make this scale, a round broom handle was cut to a four foot length and one foot sections were marked on it, using black and white paint. One of the foot long sections was further divided into twelve inches, again using black and white paint. A nail was inserted in the end of this rod which was used to place it upright in the ground next to a gravestone.

Before the actual gravestone could be photographed, however, any obstructions in front of the marker had to be cleared away. In many Newfoundland cemeteries, this became quite a task, since they were frequently overgrown with weeds, bushes, or even young trees. A small saw and a pair of pruning clippers were always carried during field work to remove these obstacles. Local clergymen never objected to this clearing of weeds and bushes, and were usually quite pleased that some of this overgrowth was being removed.

When each gravestone was photographed, the scale was placed next to the artifact. A general view of the stone, showing both its height and width, was taken, using the Yashica mounted on a tripod. This view would show the

entire stone in its immediate surroundings, providing a historical record for future use. The Yashica's large format film, 120, would also permit future enlargement of details on each gravestone. The Nikon was used primarily to record any details of the gravestone which were considered significant, again a subjective judgement. The detailed work of most gravestones that contained decorative carving, for example, was photographed. Both the Yashica and the Nikon were used to record other aspects of the place of burial, such as grave decorations or the location of the cemetery in the community.

Two major factors influenced the time when gravestones could be photographed: the position of the stone and the weather. Since most burials in Newfoundland face the east, the stones placed at the head of the grave as markers also face east. In order to obtain high quality photographs with sufficient contrast to permit the reading of the inscription on the print, stones were recorded in the morning, with the sun shining directly on the marker. The condition of the weather also influenced the time when gravestones could be photographed. As Newfoundland is an island, the weather changes quickly, and cloudy and rainy days are common during the summer months. When it rained, time was spent interviewing residents indoors, either in connection with the research on the textile traditions of the community, or on this present study. Photographs were

rarely taken on cloudy days, and some weeks saw only one or two days outdoors. In some cases, when a gravestone had to be photographed in spite of poor lighting conditions, as with several gravestones that were located under large trees, a fill-in electronic flash was used, and several bracketed exposures were taken.

After each stone had been photographed, the inscription on the marker was copied down, and several notebooks were carried for this purpose. When an inscription was copied, an attempt was made to record the words in exactly the same physical layout as on the surface of the stone. Each new line on the stone was started on a new line in the notebook. Inscriptions in the notebook were coordinated with the general photographs taken with the Yashica. Each roll of film used in the Yashica contained twelve exposures, and inscriptions in the notebook were numbered one to twelve, as each stone was photographed. Each roll of film was numbered chronologically, and the date and place were entered at the start of each new roll. When details of a marker were photographed with the Nikon, the content and number of these detailed views were entered after the inscription for that specific marker in the notebook. General views were also recorded.

The weathering of many gravestones made their inscriptions virtually illegible, and the information on these stones could only be partially recorded. One

technique was found useful in many cases in the copying of a worn inscription. A rag, dipped in a bucket of water, was used to wet the surface of the stone containing the inscription. As the stone dried, water in the incised inscription would remain longer than on the flat surface of the stone, giving these letters a darker color. This contrast often was great enough to permit the reading of an otherwise illegible epitaph.

The use of photographs in this study was not limited merely to the recording of the place of burial. During my field work in Pouch Cove, for example, photographs led to the establishment of rapport with several local residents. While working in Pouch Cove during my first visit, several general photographs of the community were taken. A middle-aged man saw my wife and I photographing gravestones in the churchyard, and invited us in for coffee. Before we left that day, I had also taken several photographs of this man's house. As Collier points out, "returning photographs to native collaborators makes a functional reason for calling"¹⁰ and I visited these people again during my second trip to Pouch Cove in order to give them copies of these photographs. My return with the gift of my photographs led to a dinner and also a discussion with several local families about the

¹⁰ Collier, Visual Anthropology, p. 47.

gravestones in the Anglican churchyard. Giving photographs to my new contacts also enabled me to thank them for their help. After several visits to Pouch Cove, I became known as the gravestone photographer, and one family asked me to take pictures of the gravestones of several of their relatives for their own photo-collection.

Photographs were also used during interviews as a focus of conversation. By showing residents a photograph of a specific gravestone, comments were often elicited that would not have turned up without such a visual example. As Collier points out:

Photographs, examined by the anthropologist and native together, become the object of discussion. This appears to reduce stress in the interview by relieving the informant of being the subject of the interrogation. Instead his role can be one of the expert guide leading the fieldworker through the content of pictures.¹¹

By using a visual example, questions could refer to specific features of each gravestone. Pointing to a portion of the photograph was much more effective than attempting to describe this visual feature orally. Having a photograph during the interview can also trigger comments about the qualities or characteristics of the object unknown to the field worker, and therefore not covered in his questions.

After field research using photography was completed, the film was developed, and a proof or contact

¹¹Collier, Visual Anthropology, p. 48.

sheet for each roll of negatives was made. At the same time, the inscription from each marker was typed on the back of five by eight inch file cards. The proof sheets were then cut apart, and the contact prints for each grave marker were mounted with rubber cement on the front of the appropriate file card. The identifying negative number was listed beneath the contact print. The card also contained sections which listed the type of symbol found on the marker, the name of the deceased, date of death, the place where the marker is located, the age of the deceased, the number of names mentioned on the marker, the religion of the deceased, his place of birth and occupation, and the stone carver's name. The page number of the field notes where the marker was described was also included. This method of listing the grave marker data permitted the arrangement of cards in any order according to the interest of the specific study. Analysis of this gravestone data took place along temporal, spatial, formal and denominational lines. Changes were noted in each of these dimensions, as well as general changes in symbols and epitaphs over time.

In each of the other levels of contact discussed in Chapter I, the patterns found in each community were combined with material from other regions of the Province in order to determine the major beliefs and practices. The historical development of each channel was noted, as well

as its current viability.

In order to supplement the narrow geographic focus of this study, a questionnaire was compiled concerning the place of burial, and distributed to students in the introductory and Newfoundland Folklore courses during the Fall and Winter terms, 1974-75, at Memorial University.¹² These students were primarily undergraduates, coming from communities all over Newfoundland and Labrador. Traditions of the student's home community were described in the answers, and twenty-eight completed questionnaires from a wide geographic area were returned. By this means, information was gathered from the Burin Peninsula, Conception Bay, Placentia Bay, Fortune Bay, the South Coast, the West Coast, the Northern Peninsula, and several communities in Labrador. By obtaining this comparative material, the extent of the patterns found in the two regions of intensive field work could be checked.

The geographic and chronological scope of this study was also broadened through the use of materials in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA). The manuscript materials dealing with death and burial were checked during the Winter term, 1974, as part of a graduate course on Folk Custom and Belief, taught by Mrs. Violetta M. Halpert.

¹² See Appendix I for this questionnaire.

Research Associate in the Department of Folklore. For several years, Mrs. Halpert has been working on a study of death and burial customs in Newfoundland, and archive materials dealing with this subject have been indexed by her. She has also extracted segments of student papers dealing with death and burial customs in Newfoundland, and kindly put these extracts at my disposal.

Besides using the material in the MUNFLA concerning death and burial customs and practices, other primary source materials were consulted during research for this study. Most primary source material that was used other than that contained in the MUNFLA dealt with one particular aspect of this study--the origins of the gravestones used in Newfoundland, especially those before 1860, and the individual craftsmen who carved these stones.

In an attempt to find information about these stonecarvers and their work, early issues of various Newfoundland newspapers were searched for potential advertisements by these craftsmen, or descriptions of their business. Issues of the following St. John's newspapers were consulted: one hundred and sixty six issues of the Newfoundland Royal Gazette, appearing between 1810 and 1812, 1830, 1842, 1845-46; thirty one issues of the Times appearing in 1834-35 and 1846; fourteen issues of the Newfoundland Mercantile Journal, appearing in 1825-26; twenty one issues of the Newfoundlander appearing in

1833-34; twenty seven issues of the Public Ledger appearing in 1837.

Material in several archives was checked for specific information concerning Newfoundland gravestones and their carvers. A list of stone carvers' names that appear on gravestones recorded in Newfoundland was used as a guide at each archive in an attempt to find information about these craftsmen. Material in the Maritime History Archive at Memorial University was consulted, but yielded comparatively little information. The Public Record Offices for Dorset, in Dorchester, and Devon, in Exeter, were also checked for any information dealing with stone carvers in the West Country, but again, very little information could be found. The Newfoundland Provincial Archives were consulted, and some information was found concerning the shipment of gravestones from England to Newfoundland during the nineteenth century.

In summary, this study utilizes various field research techniques, and has consulted a wide range of manuscript materials in order to examine the place of burial in Newfoundland both diachronically and synchronically. Through the use of photographs, tape recordings and field notes, an intensive examination of the traditions in two geographic areas of Newfoundland has been carried out. This research has been supplemented by a questionnaire that was completed by students from many parts of

the Province, as well as material from the MUNFLA collected by students during the past ten years. To supplement field work in Newfoundland, areas of the West Country and Ireland were also surveyed. Primary source materials were consulted both in Newfoundland and in the British Isles and Ireland, in order to provide depth to the diachronic aspect of this study.

Through the combination of field and archive research, using sources both historical and contemporary, this study will be both diachronic and synchronic in focus. Neglecting one approach will produce only a partial study, but the combination of these two approaches, however, permits a deeper understanding of the contact of the living with the dead focused on the place of burial. The community as a whole expresses this contact through the placement of the cemetery itself, and it is this level of contact in Newfoundland that will first be discussed.

CHAPTER IV

THE LOCATION OF THE PLACE OF BURIAL WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Man's use of the landscape that surrounds him is governed by his culture, and alterations of this landscape by man thus reflect local cultural patterns. Portions are designated for specific uses, and the location and extent of these portions indicate the importance of the uses in the life of the local community.¹ The culture decides where agricultural land should be located, what land should be used for recreational purposes, and which will be used in connection with the religious life of the community. In many areas of the West, part of this religious life concerns the burial of the dead, and the decision as to where the place of burial will be located in the local landscape permits a means through which the living may express their continued contact with the dead in these parts of the western world.

¹For an excellent introduction to the study of the cultural landscape see: John Fraser Hart, The Look of the Land, Prentice-Hall Foundations of Cultural Geography Series (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975); also see: Philip L. Wagner and Marvin W. Mikesell, eds., Readings in Cultural Geography (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

The decision to locate a cemetery in a specific geographic area is usually made by the community generally, and was originally influenced by many beliefs concerning the dead. This chapter will examine how, in Newfoundland, the living could maintain contact with the dead through their choice of a specific area of the community that would be used for burials. It will also discuss the effects that the establishment of organized churches had on the location of these places of burial, and the gradual institutionalization of this channel of contact of the living with the dead.

The decision to locate a cemetery within a specific geographic area is influenced by many factors, relating both to the spiritual beliefs of the local residents, and to the actual features of the surrounding landscape.² The choice of the location of the cemetery is determined most basically by the existence of land in the region not used for other community purposes and in which burials could take place. If unused portions of land are available both within a community and outside its immediate boundaries, then a community is able to choose how close the cemetery will be located geographically to it. If a community's residential and occupational space has been completely utilized, then it will be forced to establish a cemetery

²For a study of these factors in another region see: Joe T. Dardet, "Factors in the Location of Pittsburgh's Cemeteries," Virginia Geographer, 7 (Fall-Winter, 1972), pp. 3-8.

outside its boundaries, regardless of its beliefs concerning the location of the place of burial. In many Newfoundland communities, free land has always been available, and residents were able to choose where a cemetery was to be located in relation to the community of the living.

A cemetery could be placed in one geographic area in the midst of the community of the living, indicating the close contact between these two groups. On the other hand, the place of burial could be located at a removed distance from the community, indicating by this removal the complete change that occurs at death, the higher state of existence of the dead, or a basic fear of the dead.

In this study, the earliest visible burial areas that were recorded in each community were usually found either in the midst of the present community, or touching on the border of the residential section.³ Although

³ In many of the communities surveyed, early burial places, always unmarked, were frequently reported that supposedly contained victims of some catastrophe, such as shipwreck, or sailors who died from disease. Such places were reported in Brigus South, Conception Harbour, Chapel's Cove and Clam Cove, near Trepassy. An unmarked burial place supposedly containing the graves of Indians was also reported in Harbour Main. These types of burial places were not used by the community, and their existence was reported only in oral tradition, since no markers remain. These types of burial places were not included in this study. For a report of a similar unmarked Indian burial ground in Pennsylvania, see: Theodore K. Dong, *Tales of the Cocolamus* (New Bloomfield, Pa.: Carson Long Institute, 1936), p. 64; for a discussion of unmarked burial places for

communities can expand and slowly encompass a cemetery which was once removed geographically from it, most Newfoundland communities deliberately created a place of burial in the midst of the living. The oldest cemetery in Ferryland, for example, is located next to "the Pool," the section of the community where Lord Baltimore had settled in the early 1600's. Residents have been living in this area since Baltimore's early colony. The existence of eighteenth century gravestones in the adjoining cemetery indicates that early settlers chose a place of burial near their daily life.

When a cemetery was located within a community, it was constantly visible to those who lived around it. Although the dead were now at a higher level of existence, they were still visually present within the community through the markings of the cemetery. Tegg realized that:

Another cause that perpetuates the memory of the deceased in the country, is, that the grave is more immediately in sight of the survivors. They pass it on their way to prayer; it meets their eyes when their hearts are softened by the exercises of devotion; they linger about it on the Sabbath, when the mind is disengaged from worldly cares, and most disposed to turn aside from present loves, and to sit down among the solemn mementos of the past.⁴

disease victims in England see: Mrs. Basil Holmes, The London Burial Grounds: Notes on Their History from the Earliest Times to the Present Day (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1896), pp. 117-132; also see: MUNFLA 75-153/23 MSC.

⁴William Tegg, The Last Act: Being the Funeral Rites of Nations and Individuals (London: William Tegg and Company, 1876), p. 326.

The visual reminder could produce memories of the past life of the dead, and remind the living that "Uncle Billy" or "Aunt Kate is there." The visual presence of the cemetery could encourage private and public expressions by the living indicating their awareness of the continued existence of the dead, and of their sacred nature. On the Southern Shore, for example, most residents, who are Catholic, still bless themselves when walking or traveling in cars past the community cemetery. This blessing of one's self is also carried out each time the church is passed.

If a cemetery is located outside a community, then a certain amount of psychological distance between the living and the dead is indicated by this spatial distance. The place of burial has been removed from the daily life of the community, and a frequent visual reminder of the existence of the dead is no longer present. In all the communities in eastern Newfoundland that were visited during field work, no instances were discovered where the earliest cemetery was established at a physical distance from the community of the living. Only with the arrival of the churches would many communities witness the creation of this distance.

The location of the place of burial in a horizontal spatial plane was influenced not only by the desire for the living to have the dead spatially, and therefore

psychologically, a part of the community. The belief that the dead still retained many of the preferences that they held in life also influenced the location of the cemetery within a community.

In a society which depended for its livelihood on the sea, most early residents of Newfoundland communities were engaged in occupations connected directly or indirectly with the fishery. When a community member died, the living realized the importance of the sea in his previous life. By choosing a place of burial near the sea, the living could continue to stress this importance, and at the same time indicate their desire to please the dead through the choice of the location of the cemetery. For example, a resident of Branch, St. Mary's Bay, reported that:

Many older people say the graveyard must be where the dead can see the boats come in from fishing. The old graveyard is situated within sight and sound of the sea - just across the road from the 'pond' where the boats dock. Most of the older people were fishermen and would have liked to remain near the sea.⁵

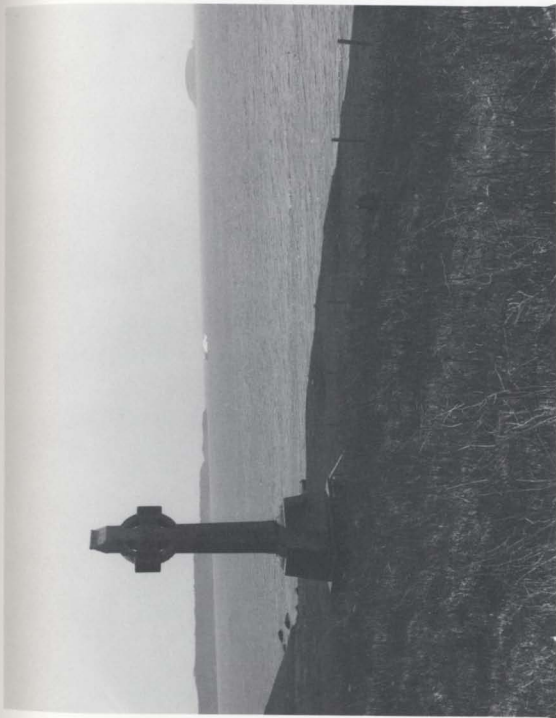
⁵ This belief would apply to women who also helped in the fishery; see: MUNFLA 71-26/51-52 MS; also see: MUNFLA 71-13/43 MSC for another report from Branch. For an instance of a riverboat captain asking to be buried overlooking a river: "so he could see the riverboats passing by" see: Larry W. Price, "Some Results and Implications of a Cemetery Study," Professional Geographer, 18 (1966), p. 201; cf. Alexander Ross, "The Burying of Suicides in the Highlands," Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club, Transactions, 3 (1887), pp. 286-289.

The location of the cemetery is determined by the living, and can express a contact with the dead. The dead, too, are believed to have definite preferences, such as the desire to "see" incoming boats, and retain many of the characteristics of the living in death. The old cemetery at Witless Bay provides a visual example of an early cemetery overlooking the sea.⁶

Besides the placement of the cemetery within the horizontal plane, its location in the vertical plane was also very much influenced by local traditions. The earliest burial ground in many Newfoundland communities was located on a hill, relating to a long tradition of burial on this physical feature in many parts of the Western world.⁷

⁶See photograph 2. The Celtic cross marking a grave in this cemetery is dated August 15, 1876, and was carved in Dublin.

⁷For a discussion of the beliefs concerning hills and mountains, see: Cora Linn Daniels and C.M. Stevans, eds., Encyclopaedia of Superstitions, Folklore and the Occult Sciences of the World: A Comprehensive Library of Human Belief and Practice in the Mysteries of Life Through More Than Six Thousand Years of Experience and Progress, Including the Fundamental Intuitions and Instincts Underlying the Structure of Civilization, Theology, Mythology, Demonology, Magic, Witchcraft, Esoteric Philosophy, Signs, Omens, Oracles, Sorceries, Auguries, Divinations, Prophecies, Methods and Means Employed in Revealing Fortune and Fate, Systems and Formulas for the Use of Physical Forces, Hypnotism, Clairvoyance, Telepathy, Spiritualism, Character Reading and Character Building, with All the Known Powers and Wonders of Mind and Soul (Chicago and Milwaukee: J.H. Yewdale, 1903), II, pp. 968-971; J.A. MacCulloch, "Mountains, Mountain-Gods," in James



Photograph 2. Old burial ground at Witless Bay.

Because of their height and the belief that the spatial home of God, heaven, is located above the earth, hills have frequently been considered as being somewhat closer to God's physical presence. Throughout the Judeo-Christian tradition, men have travelled to the tops of hills and mountains to meet God.⁸ By burying the dead on a hill, a community, in a sense, could partly assist the dead in achieving their desired future state of existence by placing them nearer to God and heaven. In his study of cemeteries in Pennsylvania, Hannon realized this connection: "Tradition suggests that the hilltop site is a reaction to our perception of the location of paradise. A cemetery located on a hill is believed to be closer to heaven."⁹

Hastings, ed., Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), VIII, 863-868. For hill burials see: Mrs. Elizabeth Stone, God's Acre: or, Historical Notices Relating to Churchyards (London: John W. Parker, 1858), p. 6.

⁸ See: Exod. 19:1-25; Isa. 2:2; Ezek. 28:16; Matt. 17:1-13.

⁹ Thomas J. Hannon, Jr., "Nineteenth Century Cemeteries in Central-West Pennsylvania," Pioneer America Society, Proceedings, 2 (1973), p. 27; also see Table 1, p. 29, in the same study. Hannon studied fifty cemeteries in Pennsylvania and found that forty-one were located on a hill. Also see: David B. Knight, Cemeteries as Living Landscapes (Ottawa: Ontario Genealogical Society, 1973), pp. 7-8, for a discussion on the reasons for placing cemeteries on a hill. For comments about the location of cemeteries on hills in Vermont see: Richard W. Brown, "Graveyards," Vermont Life, 28:3 (Spring, 1974), p. 44.

Cemeteries in Newfoundland were also most likely placed on a hilltop because of the damp climate, and the possibility that the grave could become filled with water. In low lying areas, graves would have to be bailed out before they were used,¹⁰ and the fear of burying the dead in a grave filled with water has been reported. In spite of the fact of its eventual disintegration, the living wanted to place the dead body in a place that at least appeared to be safe from the destructiveness of the environment. The body would not be placed directly in a grave filled with water, since this action, performed directly by the living, would indicate a disrespect to the dead. The community member could not exist in life if he were covered with water, and his body was treated as if it still retained many of the characteristics of its previous state. The hilly Newfoundland terrain also made placement of the cemetery on a hill almost mandatory.

In many cases, these two major beliefs concerning the location of the burial ground were combined, and the original places of burial were situated on hills overlooking the sea. The early cemetery in Tors Cove (photograph 3) is an example. This specific place of burial is

¹⁰ An account of the bailing of a grave at Chance Cove, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland is found in MUNFLA 69-16/78-79 MS; in Illinois, the belief was reported that water in a grave will cause the dead to haunt the living; water was also thought to petrify the body; see: Harry Middleton Hyatt, Folk-Lore from Adams County Illinois (Hannibal, Mo.: Alma Egan Hyatt Foundation, 1965), p. 712, #15379, 15380.



Photograph 3. Old burial ground at Tors Cove.

located on a high hill at the edge of the ocean, with the graves overlooking the water.

During the time of early Newfoundland settlement, the living in each community were able to determine which traditions would decide the geographic location of the cemetery. These beliefs related in many cases to the placement of the cemetery in both the horizontal and vertical planes. By choosing specific locations, the living expressed their continued connection with the dead by indicating the concern of the living for the future state of the dead. The community could determine which specific location would express this concern. As churches became established in all communities, the decision as to where the cemetery should be located passed from local residents to the clergyman and the guidelines of the churches. Decisions concerning the burial of the dead became highly organized. This change took place relatively late in most Newfoundland communities that were studied, and some knowledge of the historical development of the organized churches on the island is needed in order to understand the changes which took place in the traditions concerning the place of burial.

The religious history of Newfoundland has followed a course quite different from most early colonies in North America, largely due to political factors which discouraged settlement. The New England colonies were founded for the

most part as religious experiments, frequently led by clergymen, while settlement in other areas of North America was usually closely followed by the arrival of missionaries. Even though Newfoundland contained settlers by the early 1600's, a regular clergyman was not stationed on the island until the early 1700's, and only in the nineteenth century were local churches and clergymen common.

The influence of organized religion began in Newfoundland in the early proprietary colonies, ventures sponsored by West Country businessmen. In 1625, several years after his colony in Ferryland had started, Sir George Calvert announced his conversion to Roman Catholicism. Shortly after this conversion, arrangements were made to bring a Roman Catholic missionary to the settlement in Ferryland. Lord Baltimore (Sir George Calvert) visited his colony in the summer of 1627, and brought two Roman Catholic priests with him, Anthony Pole and Thomas Longville. Longville soon returned to England, but Pole remained in Ferryland until 1629.

At approximately the same time, an Anglican clergyman was also stationed in Ferryland, Rev. Erasmus Stourton. Stourton had obtained his M.A. from Cambridge in 1627, and probably went to Newfoundland some time during that year. Two religious groups were present at Ferryland, each having their own clergyman. One Roman Catholic report to Rome commented on this contact by stating: "As to religious

usage, under the very same roofs of Calvert, on one hand the Catholic Mass was said; on the other, the heretics carried out their own."¹¹ The presence of Roman Catholic priests in the colony greatly disturbed Stourton, and he soon returned to England, and levelled charges against Baltimore. Because of the weather, however, Baltimore soon applied to the Crown for a land grant in a more southerly region, and the Roman Catholic clergyman left the colony with Baltimore.

With Stourton's return to England, and Calvert's emigration from Ferryland, organized religion disappeared from Newfoundland until the next century. Since the British government was frequently undecided over the issue of permitting settlement in Newfoundland, no clergymen were sent to the island to establish churches and organize religious districts.

Settlement in Newfoundland began slowly along the English shore, from Bonavista to Trepassey, and small settlements began to arise which never had contact with organized religion. A writer accompanying the French military force which destroyed many communities in Newfoundland in 1698, commented on this lack:

¹¹ Raymond J. Lahey, ed., "Early English Colonization and Religion," mimeographed (St. John's: Memorial University, Department of Religious Studies, 1974), p. 3. I would like to thank Dr. Lahey for his continued help in my research on Newfoundland religious history, as well as the use of much of his unpublished research.

They [the English] have not a single minister of religion in these establishments, though more than twenty of them are larger settlements than Placentia. They do not know what religion they belong to. The greater part of them, born in this country, have never received any instructions, and never make any act of religion, no more than mere savages.¹²

Several years later, in 1700, Rev. Thomas Bray echoed much of the same sentiment when he wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning the state of religion in Newfoundland:

Can any one believe it, when he is told, that from such a Nation so little care has been taken, with respect to such a Colony, that there neither was, nor is, any Preaching, Prayers or Sacraments, or any Ministerial and Divine offices performed on that Island; but that should be suffered to live as those, who know no God in the World.¹³

Responding to Bray's pleas, the Bishop of London decided to appoint a regular Anglican clergyman for the island, and in 1700 designated the Rev. John Jackson as "Minister at St. John's Fort." On July 12, 1701, Jackson arrived at St. John's, the first of a succession of missionaries that was supported by the Society for the Propagation of

¹² Daniel W. Prowse, A History of the Island of Newfoundland from the English Colonial and Foreign Records (London: Macmillan and Company, 1895), p. 218.

¹³ Rev. Thomas Bray, Memorial Representing the Present State of Religion on the Continent of North America (London: William Downing, 1700), p. 18.

the Gospel.¹⁴ S.P.G. missionaries were sent to various outposts during the eighteenth century: Placentia, 1713-25; Bonavista, 1725-45; Trinity, 1730-; and Harbour Grace, 1765-.

In the communities that were surveyed in this study, i.e., those on the Southern Shore and the southwestern section of Conception Bay, three organized religious denominations eventually established churches: Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism and Methodism. The establishment of each of these denominations came relatively late in the history of the regions, and clergymen were generally not stationed in these areas until 1800. Although there were several reports of local residents organizing religious services,¹⁵ most communities had little contact with structured religion.

Not until 1765, with the appointment of Laurence Coughlan as missionary at Harbour Grace did the Conception Bay area have a regularly stationed Anglican clergyman in the area. Before this time, contact with organized religion for Anglicans came only through the infrequent visits of clergymen from St. John's.

¹⁴For the early history of S.P.G. involvement in Newfoundland see: Ruth M. Christensen, "The Establishment of S.P.G. Missions in Newfoundland, 1703-1783," Protestant Episcopal Church, Historical Magazine, 20 (1951), pp. 207-229; also see: Robert S. Rayson, "The Church of England in Newfoundland," Canadian Church Historical Society Journal, 1:3 (1952), pp. 1-7.

¹⁵Christensen, "Establishment," p. 217.

Shortly after his arrival, Coughlan announced openly that he was a follower of John Wesley. He considered himself a Methodist, and he soon had many followers in the area, especially among the common fishermen. The merchants in Harbour Grace eventually forced Coughlan to leave in 1773. A more conventional Anglican clergyman was then appointed, and Anglican clergymen have been stationed in Harbour Grace ever since this time.

A split had occurred in a few short years among Protestants in the Conception Bay area, and there were now two Protestant denominations: Anglican and Methodist. Harbour Grace had an Anglican clergyman from 1773, while, after Coughlan's departure, the Methodists did not see any type of missionary until 1791.

In spite of the absence of a clergyman, the Methodists in the area attempted to continue services conducted by laymen. William Black, a Methodist missionary, preached at Port de Grave and Bay Roberts on August 21, 1791, and at Port de Grave he found a group of twenty-seven Methodists who met regularly under the direction of a local resident, George Vey.¹⁶ Rev. William Thoresby visited Brigus on January 11, 1796, and found a group of

¹⁶D.W. Johnson, A History of Methodism in Eastern British America, Including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Bermuda, from the Beginning till the Consummation of Union with the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches in 1925 (Sackville, N.B.: Tribune Printing Company Limited, 19--), p. 269.

active Methodists in the community. He commented that he "gave them tickets and joined some new members and backsliders." He added, "We had a precious meeting."¹⁷

With the ending of the American Revolutionary War in 1783, the British Government became uneasy over other colonies in the Empire, especially those which contained large numbers of non-English settlers. Newfoundland was considered as one of these potential trouble spots, with her large numbers of Irish immigrants, and the British Government felt that some concessions should be made to these minorities in order to ensure their loyalty to the Crown. In Newfoundland, therefore, a limited religious freedom was granted on October 24, 1784, in what was called "liberty of conscience."¹⁸ This measure was aimed primarily at the Roman Catholics on the island. They were now permitted to practice their religion openly, and an administrative system of clergy was established.

Before this measure, Roman Catholic priests were not permitted to preach in Newfoundland, and no organized Roman Catholic church existed. Irish settlers had been coming to Newfoundland since the late 1600's, and they arrived in communities that had no organized religion.

¹⁷Johnson, A History of Methodism, p. 265.

¹⁸M.F. Howley, Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland (Boston: Doyle & Whittle, 1888), p. 180.

Only occasionally would a missionary from Ireland, under disguise, visit Catholic settlers in an area.¹⁹ Large numbers of Irish had settled in both the Conception Bay and Southern Shore areas during the 1600's and 1700's, and the passage of this measure enabled the Roman Catholic Church to station clergymen and build churches in these neglected regions:

Rev. James O'Donel was appointed head of the newly recognized Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland, and he arrived in 1784. In 1801, he began organizing the island into administrative districts in order that regular clergymen could be appointed to serve most areas. Four major districts were set up: the St. John's area, from LaManche to Holyrood, attended by two clergymen; the Harbour Grace area, including Holyrood to Grates Cove, cared for by one priest; the Placentia area, from Cape St. Mary's to Fortune Bay, cared for by one clergyman, and the Ferryland district, from LaManche to Cape St. Mary's. Apparently there was a priest by the name of Patrick Whelan preaching in the Harbour Grace area before 1794,²⁰ and the Southern Shore also had a missionary by the name of Fitzpatrick,²¹ though

¹⁹ For a brief discussion concerning several accounts of Roman Catholic priests visiting the island before 1784 see: Howley, Ecclesiastical History, p. 181.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 183.

²¹ Ibid., p. 184.

little is known about their work.

Before the passage of the measure allowing "liberty of conscience," Roman Catholic clergymen were rarely found in Newfoundland. Any priests that did visit as missionaries were frequently sought by local officials since they were prohibited from holding religious services in the colony. These clergymen were therefore not able to build a church or organize a congregation. Catholic parishes were not systematically established until after 1800 in all areas, including Conception Bay and the Southern Shore, and contact with Roman Catholic clergymen before this time was minimal.

As in most areas of Conception Bay, Protestant clergymen were not stationed along the Southern Shore until the late 1700's and the early 1800's. Until that time, only periodic visits were made by clergymen living in St. John's.

The Methodists made little progress on the Southern Shore, even though they apparently sent missionaries into this area. A Roman Catholic clergyman stationed at Ferryland in 1796 commented in a letter about the progress of Roman Catholicism in the area:

Religion has made great progress in the country, especially in my own district. I have completed an elegant chapel with a convenient dwelling, all at my own expense, except £10, which the poor people subscribed last year. The many fruitless attempts of the Methodist preachers have been

successfully baffled, and there is now but one of that sect in the districts of Ferryland and Trepassey, and even his family became Catholic this year.²²

In 1793, the first Anglican clergyman stationed on the Southern Shore began work in the region. Rev. Samuel Cole was appointed missionary at Ferryland and Bay Bulls, and he was immediately struck by the religious neglect among the people. During the nineteenth century, the number of Anglicans living on the Southern Shore decreased, as gradually more and more converted to Roman Catholicism.

The geographic regions surveyed in this study, like most areas of Newfoundland, did not witness the establishment of local churches supervised by clergymen until the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries.²³ The

²²Quoted in Howley, Ecclesiastical History, p. 202.

²³For example, an Anglican missionary commented about conditions in communities along the South Coast in 1845, when he wrote: "Here the bishop came on coves and settlements whose inhabitants were seventy miles from the nearest clergyman; he found traces of Archdeacon Wix' visit of ten years before, the people repeating the prayers which he had taught them, and showing the Bibles and Prayer-books which he had given to them, cheering instances of seed scattered but not in vain. In some places he found spiritual life sustained by the piety of the resident agent of the merchants, who read prayers in his house every Sunday, and welcomed all who would join him, but the lack of religious instruction and the means of grace, in these distant settlements, (no bishop of the Church had ever visited beyond Placentia Bay), was upon the whole distressing. Thousands of church-people were scattered along the coast, literally as sheep without a shepherd. Between the heads of St. George's and Placentia Bays - a line of coast probably of 400 miles in extent, calculating the various bays and harbours, all more or less inhabited - there was only one clergyman" (Rev. H.W. Tucker,

Southern Shore and the Conception Bay areas were settled in the early 1600's, and for almost two hundred years many communities existed without the influence of organized religion. Of these two areas, only the community of Harbour Grace provides an exception, with a clergyman arriving there in 1765. In all other communities, local residents had to make decisions pertaining to matters that would have been controlled by the churches in local communities in England or Ireland, including practices concerning the burial of the dead.

The location of the place of burial had traditionally been determined by community members, influenced by local beliefs and the desire to continue some form of contact with community members now dead. With the arrival of a church and clergyman, this location would now be determined by ecclesiastical rules and norms.


In most communities that were surveyed an older burial area was discovered that was apparently used before the local churches were established. These areas in some communities no longer contain any grave markers, such as the old burial ground near Gruchy's Store in Pouch Cove. The existence of these areas was often indicated by the presence of rough field stones that were used to mark the graves. In other communities, such as Renew's and Port

Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of Edward Field, D.D., Bishop of Newfoundland, 1844-1876 [London: W. Wells Gardner, 1877], pp. 42-43).

Kirwan, grave markers which are dated clearly indicated that the area was used for burial before the arrival of the local church.

When a church was built in a community, church customs frequently dictated the need to establish a new burial area. This is especially true in the case of the Anglican and Methodist churches, since they felt that the proper location of the place of burial was the land surrounding the church. The establishment of churchyards as places of burial accompanied the construction of these churches, and burials now took place in these areas. In the case of the Roman Catholic churches, burials were sometimes permitted to continue to take place in the older burial ground, but when this was finally filled, the church would then determine where the new cemetery would be located.

The desire of members of the community to be buried in an area possessing the spatial location determined by local custom and belief did not completely disappear in some cases. In Pouch Cove, for example, an Anglican Church was built around 1840, and burial in the churchyard replaced burial on a nearby hill. In 1914, the Anglican clergyman decided to stop burials in the churchyard, since it was almost full, and open a new burial ground located on a high hill behind the community. Even before the churchyard was completely filled, some residents were



expressing a desire to be buried on this hill, rather than around the church. When questioned about this, a man from Pouch Cove explained:

But I'll tell you this much that when they put the cemetery up on the hill there's lots of people made their wish before they died that if they, ah, that when they died they wanted to be buried up on that hill. [Why was that?] I don't know. Because it was a beautiful spot or something, nice place.²⁴

This feeling was so strong that a woman decided that she wanted to be buried on this hill, rather than with her husband who had been buried years before in the churchyard.

Church guidelines and rules shifted the decision as to where a cemetery should be located from the desires of the local residents to the dictates of an external organization. This shift altered quite substantially the effectiveness of this channel as a means of contact between the living and the dead. No longer could local traditions determine where the place of burial was to be located. Indeed, in some communities, such as Petty Harbour and Brigus, new burial areas established by a church were removed completely from the residential area of the community.²⁵ This physical separateness signalled, at least partially, the removal of the dead from the

²⁴ MUNFLA 74-78.

²⁵ For an account of the establishment by Bishop Fleming of this new cemetery in Petty Harbour see: Howley, Ecclesiastical History, p. 333.

community of the living, and the lessening of contact of the living with the dead.

The living were able to express their contact with the dead during the period of early Newfoundland settlement by their choice of the location of the place of burial within the community. The selection of this location would indicate the community's concern for the future existence of the dead, and the symbolic closeness of the dead to the community of the living. In the Newfoundland communities surveyed, the place of burial was usually located within the community itself, and frequently on a hill overlooking the sea. These traditions were quite strong in most communities until the arrival of organized churches, primarily in the early 1800's. Through the church's influence, the location of the place of burial was now determined by the accepted laws of the church, instead of local beliefs. The place of burial was frequently shifted from the hill overlooking the sea to the land surrounding the church, or to an area outside the community. With this shift, the community could no longer express fully its desire for continued contact with the dead through its choice of the location of the place of burial. The arrival of the churches would also influence other means of contact of the living with the dead. One of the most complex was the use of one specific piece of ground, a cemetery, as a place of burial, and this means of contact will be examined next.

CHAPTER V

THE GROUPING OF GRAVES IN THE COMMUNITY

When the dead are buried, a community must decide how these dead are related to other deceased members and whether social distances in life will be retained through spatial distances in death. A community is able to choose whether all its dead should be grouped together in one common area, a cemetery, whether separate areas should exist for various social and religious classes, or whether each burial is to be located in a separate geographic area. This decision enables the living to maintain a contact with the dead by providing a burial place used by members of the same social or religious group, or by keeping separate in death those who were apart in life.

The practice of grouping the dead together in one common burial area has been influenced by many factors in Newfoundland, and apparently one of the strongest was the presence of religious conflict. After the establishment of organized churches in each community, the use of uniform burial areas became accepted, in many cases due to the belief in the need for burial sanctioned by the church. This chapter will first discuss the early burial patterns found in the two geographic areas surveyed in this study. An examination of the history of religious conflict in these

regions will permit an understanding of the early burial patterns. The establishment of churches greatly changed these patterns, usually through the need for burial in consecrated ground,⁴ and the development of this concept will be discussed. Finally, the objects which are placed in many cemeteries, such as a large cross, and the methods of marking the boundaries of the cemetery will be examined.

When field work initially began for this study, Petty Harbour, Bay Bulls, Witless Bay, Tors Cove and Renew's along the Southern Shore were visited. Through discussions with residents in each community, it readily became evident that the early burials took place in one specific cemetery, long disused, and now containing no more than ten gravestones. Further research in the other communities along the Southern Shore confirmed this pattern. Through the early dates on many gravestones, it was evident that these cemeteries were in use before the arrival of clergymen in this region.

After approximately a month of field work in various Southern Shore communities, research was shifted to the Conception Bay communities of Port de Grave, Cupids and Brigus. Instead of finding one common burial ground in each community that was used before the establishment of a local church, many burial places, indicated by gravestones, were found scattered throughout the community. Early burials took place randomly, in such areas as a family

meadow or garden, along a road, or in small established plots. When a Port de Grave resident was asked why all people, English and Irish, were not buried in one common area before the arrival of the churches, as on the Southern Shore, she replied, "We didn't get along in life, we weren't going to get along when dead." Her comments succinctly summarized the complex reasons for many of the differences in the burial patterns of the Southern Shore and this specific region of Conception Bay.

English immigrants had settled in both the Conception Bay area and on the Southern Shore since the early 1600's, and by late in the same century, Irish were also settling in the same communities. The contact of English and Irish had quite different effects in each of these two areas. In the area of Conception Bay that was surveyed, social and religious conflict was common, while little conflict seems to have existed on the Southern Shore. This presence or absence of conflict influenced the burial patterns, and the cooperation or separation in life was maintained through the proxemics of burial.

Religious conflict in the area of Conception Bay surveyed has always been widespread, occurring between the two immigrant groups, English and Irish, and among the religious denominations, Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic. Through a survey of this strife, the magnitude of these divisions, which extended even to the separation

of the dead, becomes clear, and explains to a great extent the location of early gravestones that were recorded in these communities.

One of the earliest systematic campaigns to repress the increasing numbers of Irish that were settling on the island began in the mid-eighteenth century under the leadership of Governor Hugh Dorril. In 1755, he issued a proclamation which he hoped would rid Newfoundland of all Roman Catholics. He stated:

Whereas a great number of Irish Roman Catholics are annually brought over here, a great part of which have but small wages, so that after paying their passage to this place and the charges of clothing, &c., during the fishing season, their whole wages are spent, and they have not wherewith either to pay their passages or to purchase provisions for the winter, by which means they not only become chargeable to this place, but many robberies and felonies are committed by them, to the great loss and terror of His Majesty's liege subjects in this island. This is therefore to give notice to all masters of ships or vessels that bring such passengers to this island, that after the fishing season is over, they carry from hence the whole number and same passengers they bring here, except such as have my order to remain in the land; hereof, they are not to fail, as they will prevent being proceeded against with the greatest severity the law in such cases will admit.

R. DORRELL¹

The Irish who came to Newfoundland to help with the summer fishery were strictly forbidden to remain on the island.

¹Rev. Charles Pedley, The History of Newfoundland, from the Earliest Times to the Year 1860 (London: Longman, Green, Roberts & Green, 1863), p. 91.

Dorril's anti-Catholic campaign was not only directed at limiting the number of Irish immigrants to the island. On several occasions, Roman Catholic priests visited the Conception Bay area, and Dorril was determined to punish any residents who associated with them. In 1755, he learned of the presence of several of these priests, and ordered the officials in the Harbour Grace area to take immediate action. He wrote the magistrate at Harbour Grace:

Whereas I am informed that a Roman Catholic priest is at this time at Harbour Grace, and that he publicly read mass, which is contrary to law, and against the peace of our sovereign lord the King. You are hereby required and directed on the receipt of this, to cause the said priest to be taken into custody and sent round to this place. In this you are not to fail.²

The priest was never apprehended, but the Governor was determined to abolish any Catholic practice of religion in the area. The Governor's deputy held court in Harbour Main on September 20, 1755, and an order was issued to the local magistrates:

By Thomas Burnett, Esq., Deputy or surrogate, to Richard Dorell, Esq., governor, &c.

At a court held before me at Harbour Main the 20th of September, at which you, Charles Garland, was present; at which time Michael Katem did appear before us, and by his own confession did admit a Roman priest to celebrate public mass according to the Church of Rome, in one of his fish-rooms or store-houses, and he, being present himself, which is contrary to law and against our sovereign lord the King, we think proper

²Pedley, History, p. 92.

to fine him the sum of fifty pounds, and to demolish the said fish-room or store-house where mass was said, and I do likewise order the said Michael Katem to sell all the possessions he has or holds in this harbour, on or before the 25th day of November ensuing. At the same day appeared before us Michael Landrican, who was guilty of the said crimes, for which we think proper to fine him the sum of twenty pounds, to burn his house and stage down to the ground, and he to quit the said harbour by the 25th of November ensuing. At the same time appeared before us, Darby Costley, Robert Finn, Michael Mooring, and Ronald McDonald, all which by their own confession are Roman Catholics and inhabitants of this place, which is contrary to law that they should hold any property in this island. We therefore think proper to fine the said Darby Costley ten pounds, Michael Mooring the sum of eight pounds, and Ronald McDonald the sum of two pounds ten shillings; all the said fines in sterling money of Great Britain and all the said persons to quit the said island by 25th of November ensuing.

T. BURNETT

To Charles Garland, Esq., one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace at Harbour Main.³

Sixteen others in the Harbour received fines in connection with this incident. At the same time, a man named Kennedy confessed that his marriage was performed by a Catholic priest. He received a fine of ten pounds, his house was burnt, and he was ordered to leave the island.⁴

In Carbonear, local officials learned that mass had been said in a house occupied by two Catholic tenants, and owned by a man named Pike. Dorril not only fined the two Catholics £40 and ordered them to leave Newfoundland, he

³Pedley, History, pp. 93-94.

⁴See: M.F. Howley, Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland (Boston: Doyle & Whittle, 1888), p. 173.

also instructed that the house was to be burnt, even though Pike was a Protestant.⁵

Not only did the government under Dorril attempt to widely suppress Roman Catholics. Friction between Roman Catholics and Anglicans seems to have been widespread in the Conception Bay area, and disturbances frequently broke out between these two groups. A court case held in September, 1755, was described in the governmental records:

Whereas it has been represented to me at a court held at Harbour Grace, at which you, George and Charles Garland, Esqrs., were present, at which time there did appear by evidence, that George Tobyn, master of the St. Patrick brig, had threatened the life of Phillip Payne, merchant, and it likewise did appear that he frequently did wear Irish colours, and sometimes hoisted them at the ensign-staff and his English ensign at his jack-staff, to bid defiance to the English and Jersey men of this Harbour, and as it appears that all this was done to stir up a spirit of rebellion amongst the Roman Catholics of this Harbour, they being far superior in number to the Protestants, insomuch that it is sometimes a difficult matter to bury their dead, and have been obliged to make use of all the force they could assemble, to prevent their insolence whilst they were burying their dead; We think proper, therefore, to fine the said George Tobyn the sum of ten pounds for his insolent behaviour. I do hereby require and direct, etc.

T. Burnett⁶

As part of his anti-Catholic campaign, Dorril introduced an oath of office that had to be taken by anyone obtaining a governmental position in the colony. The form was: "We, _____, do declare that we do believe that there

⁵Howley, Ecclesiastical History, pp. 173-174.

⁶Pedley, History, p. 96.

is not any Transubstantiation in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatever."⁷ Because of its theological content, this oath clearly could not be taken by Roman Catholics.

When Hugh Palliser was appointed governor in 1762, he continued much of the anti-Catholic persecution that marked Derril's administration. Shortly after Palliser entered office, he issued three proclamations which affected Roman Catholics in the colony:

1. Popish servants are not to be permitted to remain in any place, but where they served the previous summer.
2. No more than two Papists are allowed to live in one house unless in the house of a Protestant.
3. No Papist to be allowed to keep a public house, or sell liquors by retail.⁸

Palliser issued several other proclamations shortly after these. All houses inhabited by Catholics who encouraged other Catholics to stay in Newfoundland were ordered to be pulled down. Catholics who helped with the fishery during the summer months in various parts of the island could not come to St. John's to spend the winter. All children born in Newfoundland had to be baptized by an Anglican clergyman.

Just as the number of arrests by public officials appeared to be on the decline, a new element was introduced.

⁷Pedley, History, p. 174.

⁸Ibid., p. 178.

into the Conception Bay area that would create renewed religious conflict. This was the arrival of Methodism into the area brought by Laurence Coughlan.

Coughlan, an Irish Catholic by birth, was converted to Methodism in 1754 in County Leitrim. He became a devoted disciple of John Wesley, and in the early 1760's was appointed to work in the County Waterford area of Ireland.⁹

In 1764, the inhabitants of Harbour Grace began raising money for the construction of a church, and they petitioned the Anglican clergyman in St. John's to officiate as minister. The annual S.P.G. report for 1765 contained details of this petition:

... the People of Harbour Grace and Carboneer, and some other inhabitants of Conception Bay, have lately raised a Subscription for a new Church at Harbour Grace, and gone a great Way towards finishing it, praying Mr. Langman to officiate there next summer as often as he can, which he has promised to do with the Society's Leave, till they can be supplied with a resident Minister, which they are so desirous of, that they have already set on foot a Subscription towards his Support.¹⁰

Several residents knew of Coughlan's work in Ireland, and asked him to officiate at Harbour Grace. He arrived in

⁹ C.H. Crookshank, A History of Methodism in Ireland (Belfast: R.S. Allen, Son & Allen; London: T. Woolmer, 1885), I, 149.

¹⁰ Raymond J. Lahey, ed., "Newfoundland Material Contained in the Annual Reports of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1704-1800," mimeographed (St. John's: Memorial University, Department of Religious Studies, 1974), p. 12.

1765 as the official Anglican clergyman, and began receiving financial support from the S.P.G. in 1767.¹¹

From the beginning, Coughlan attempted to establish a deep personal religion, filled with the devotional qualities that characterized so much of early Methodism.¹² This emphasis disturbed the more conservative members of the congregation, especially the local merchants and magistrates. Coughlan scandalized this element by holding prayer meetings in local homes, frequently those of poorer fishermen. He later commented:

The Way in which this Work began was very remarkable. In the Course of the Winter, I went from House to House, and read a Portion of God's Word, and expounded the same: This I continued to do about four Times a Week, for near three Years¹³

¹¹ Methodism grew directly from Anglicanism, and many early Methodist leaders were ordained Anglican clergymen. John Wesley himself was an ordained minister of the Church of England, and he felt up until his death that the Methodist movement could remain within the Anglican Church. For a brief history of the early Methodist movement see: Rupert E. Davies, Methodism (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1963), pp. 24-131.

¹² For a discussion of these early devotional qualities of Methodism see: Davies, Methodism, pp. 94-121; Horton Davies, Worship and Theology in England, Vol. III: From Watts and Wesley to Maurice, 1690-1850 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 143-209.

¹³ Laurence Coughlan, An Account of the Work of God in Newfoundland, North America, in a Series of Letters to which Are Prefixed a Few Choice Experiences: Some of Which Were Taken from the Lips of Persons Who Died Triumphantly in the Faith, to which Are Added Some Excellent Sentiments, Extracted from the Writings of an Eminent Devine (London: W. Gilbert, 1776), p. 9.

In his sermons, Coughlan lashed out at the sinfulness of the people--all people--from the lowliest fisherman to the magistrates and merchants. He claimed that salvation could come only through a total rebirth, and the acceptance of a personal Christianity. Coughlan travelled through many areas of Conception Bay, usually staying with the poorer people. His knowledge of Irish helped him greatly, for apparently there were numbers of Irish settlers using this language. Many of Coughlan's earliest followers were Irish.

Coughlan refused to make any concessions with regard to religious matters if he felt that a person's salvation would be endangered. In one instance, a baby was brought to him to be baptized. He felt that the godfather was unsuitable as a Christian, and he refused to baptize the child. The naval chaplain finally had to be contacted to perform the baptism.

With his condemnation of the sinfulness of all classes of society, high and low, his association with the poorer people, his stubbornness regarding daily religious practices, Coughlan soon found himself at odds with the local merchant families in the area, especially the Garland family of Harbour Grace. Coughlan's brand of religion posed too much of a threat to the status system in the community. These families began to complain directly to Coughlan concerning his actions. He later commented about

this situation:

The Enemy now began to work from another Quarter, in the following manner: One Merchant was sent in the Name of many, or as a Representative of the Body; to me, with this Message, that if I did not change my Way of Preaching, they would withdraw their Subscription; but this Gentleman said, he would not; notwithstanding he knew the others would, for that they said my Way of preaching was Madness.¹⁴

Between 1768 and 1773, legal complaints were brought against Coughlan, and prominent citizens claimed that he did not properly respect members of the Church of England.

By 1773, Coughlan had become convinced that his usefulness in Newfoundland had ceased, and he decided to return to England. He wrote to Wesley concerning his decision,¹⁵ and early in 1773 he left the island.

When Coughlan left Harbour Grace, the Methodists were placed under the care of three laymen: John Stretton, Arthur Young and Thomas Pottle. After his departure, Coughlan received several letters concerning the continuing strife between the Methodists and Anglicans in the area. One read:

Dear Sir, soon as you left us, the Harbour Grace Scribes and Pharisees occupied Moses's Seat; G and G have crept into the Church: The Enemy came and sowed Tares: One preaches one Sunday, and

¹⁴ Coughlan, Account, p. 14.

¹⁵ For the contents of this letter see: T. Watson Smith, History of the Methodist Church within the Territories Embraced in the Late Conference of Eastern British America, Including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Bermuda (Halifax: Methodist Book Room, 1877), I, 55-56.

the other another; and they intend to keep possession, until a Missionary comes out: The first Sermon Mr. G. _____ preached was at the Funeral of poor J. _____ S. _____, who was found drowned at the Wharf, a little after you sailed, the same Morning: the Subject of the Sermon run on the Respect, Obedience and Homage, that People ought to pay to Magistrates, & c.¹⁶

Trouble continued, for in less than a year, another letter was written to Coughlan describing recent incidents:

J. _____ K. _____ and J. _____ C. _____ are very blasphemous Enemies, as also some others, though not so openly as K. _____. Last Sunday Seven-night, my Text being, The Wicked shall be turned into Hell & C. and the Lord enabling me to apply it pretty home, in the Application (for they had lately been at a Hurling Match, & c) they could not beat it: K. _____ threatened, if I went on a little farther, he would haul me by the Nose out of the Church, calling me, as I heard afterwards, by opprobrious Names; and J. _____ C. _____ expressed himself very indecently.¹⁷

During 1775, Rev. Balfour, who had been stationed in Trinity Bay as the Anglican clergyman, was transferred to Coughlan's old post at Harbour Grace. This formalized the split that had occurred during the previous years and created, in effect, two Protestant denominations in the Conception Bay area. When Balfour wrote to the S.P.G. headquarters in London in 1777, he remarked that in his area, one half the people were "addicted to deism and licentiousness, and the other to enthusiasm."¹⁸

¹⁶Coughlan, Account, pp. 79-80.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 160-161.

¹⁸Lahey, "Newfoundland Material," p. 19.

"Enthusiasm" was the derogatory term used for Methodists.

With the rise of Methodism in the Conception Bay area, friction now occurred between two Protestant denominations, the Anglicans and Methodists. In the past, conflict was common between Roman Catholics and Anglicans. Animosity would soon grow between Methodists and Roman Catholics.

In 1784, John Shetton, a Methodist missionary, wrote to John Wesley, alarmed at the spread of "Popery" in Conception Bay. Wesley wrote back and told him that every effort should be made to check this spread, since, as Wesley felt, "If that deadly enemy of true religion, Popery, is breaking in upon you, there is indeed no time to be lost; for it is far easier to prevent the plague than stop it."¹⁹

Roman Catholic persecution against the Methodists began to rise. In 1799, for example, a group of Roman Catholics locked a Methodist clergyman in a smoke house, apparently intent on killing him.²⁰

The first three decades of the nineteenth century saw a large influx of Irish immigrants to the island, and numbers of these new immigrants flocked to the Conception Bay area. The declining fishery provided few jobs, and

¹⁹ John Telford, ed., The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M. (London: Epworth Press, 1931), VII, 260.

²⁰ See: Smith, History, I, 356.

the increase seemed to rekindle the animosities of the past. Philip Gosse was living at Carbonear in 1827, and later recalled the atmosphere that existed at the time in the Conception Bay region:

There existed in Newfoundland in 1827, among the Protestant population of the island, an habitual dread of the Irish as a class, which was more oppressively felt than openly expressed, and there was customary an habitual caution in conversation, to avoid any unguarded expression which might be laid hold of by their jealous enmity. It was very largely this dread which impelled me to forsake Newfoundland, as a residence in 1835; and I recollect saying to my friends the Jaqueses, 'that when we got to Canada, we might climb to the top of the tallest tree in the forest, and shout, 'Irishmen!' at the top of our voice, without fear.'²¹

In 1831-32, petitions began to arrive in England from Newfoundland containing demands that the island have its own legislature. In 1832, the British Government bowed to these demands, and an election was arranged. During this election campaign, several incidents pointed out the severity of the split between Protestants and Catholics in the Conception Bay area.

A young Irishman, John Kent, was running for office in this election, and he had the political backing of the Roman Catholic bishop of St. John's, Bishop Fleming. Henry Winton, editor of one of St. John's leading newspapers, The Public Ledger, and a Protestant, attacked Kent's

²¹ Edmund Gosse, The Naturalist of the Sea-Shore: The Life of Philip Henry Gosse (London: W. Heinemann, 1896), p. 43.

candidacy, claiming that he did not possess sufficient qualifications to serve in the legislature.

Bishop Fleming was insulted by Winton's remarks, and he soon responded through several letters published in the leading Roman Catholic newspaper, the Newfoundlander. Winton virtually condemned the bishop for interfering in public matters. Feelings ran high, and the political issues quickly took on religious undertones. The Roman Catholics in St. John's held a meeting, and praised Bishop Fleming's actions, while bitterly denouncing Winton.

In another election held in the autumn of 1833, the Roman Catholic clergy openly backed candidates, while Winton supported a candidate that Bishop Fleming had forced out of the race. Fleming denounced Winton from the pulpit because of his actions.

On Christmas night, 1833, tensions were high, and a mob gathered outside Winton's home in St. John's, intent on burning it. Troops had to be called in to disperse the crowd, and prevent a riot. For months afterward, placards were placed on Winton's house at night, threatening his life.

The conflict between Winton and the Roman Catholics reached a high point by 1835. In May of that year, Winton went to several towns in the Conception Bay area to conduct business. On May 19th, he left Carbonear, on his way to Harbour Grace. Winton later reconstructed the events

of his journey and described them in the third person in his newspaper:

Shortly after four o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, the 19th ultimo, Mr. Winton left Carbonear on horseback, with the intention of reaching Harbour Grace, distant about three miles. Before he quitted the town, he was joined by Captain Churchward of the brig Hazard, who was also proceeding to the same place on foot. Having gone through the marsh in the neighbourhood of the town and passed the bridge, they leisurely ascended the long and rugged hill, which lay in their way, and having passed the level ground on the summit, were descending that part of the road commonly called Saddle Hill (familiar to many of our readers as the scene of former outrages, both accompanied and unaccompanied with deeds of murder) when a gang of ruffians hideously disguised, with painted faces, suddenly issued from the woods on the right of the road. Instantly, the foremost of them, with uplifted arm, approached Mr. Winton, and by a heavy blow on the side of the head with a stone, felled him from the horse while others sprang towards Captain Churchward and effectually prevented him from rendering any assistance. From the time when Mr. Winton fell to the ground, he was rendered powerless by several heavy blows being dealt in succession on his head. While this scene was enacting, Captain Churchward called out violently, and in the utmost distress, begged them to desist; but he was soon hustled into the woods to the left of the road, when two men threatened him with instant death, if he offered any resistance, or made the slightest noise.

The savages, however, had not completed their diabolical purpose. Not content with the brutal violence they had committed upon their victim, they proceeded to fill his ears with mud and gravel, and to the question, 'Do you mean to murder me?' one of the ruffians replied, 'Hold your tongue you _____'; and then opening a clasp knife, stooped down and mutilated one of the ears. At this period, one of the gang exclaimed, 'Hold his hands,' whilst another called out, 'Here he is, we have him.' They then took off the other ear, and left the victim insensible. Upon recovering, which Mr. Winton thinks must have been very shortly afterwards, he found himself alone and bleeding most profusely from the wounds inflicted upon the head, as well as from

the excision of the ears, and upon rising from the ground, he perceived, indistinctly (from the quantity of blood which streamed over the head and filled the eyes) two objects before him, one of which, as Mr. Winton approached with a pistol in his hand, of which, from the suddenness of the attack, he had hitherto been unable to avail himself, retreated into the woods whence he had issued, whilst the other, who proved to be Captain Churchward, ran up, and urged him to proceed as fast as possible to Harbour Grace. A desire to follow up and apprehend the miscreants, now that there was some chance of fair play for it, was the first natural impulse. But this was overruled, and Mr. Winton and his fellow-traveller walked at a rapid pace until they reached the house of Dr. Stirling (about a mile and a half from the scene of these barbarities), when the haemorrhage ceased, and the wounds were carefully and skilfully dressed.²²

Public opinion was outraged over this incident, and the political nature of the underlying issues quickly gave way to divisions along sectarian lines. Protestant leaders pointed the blame at the Roman Catholics in the Harbour Grace-Carboney area. Large sums of money were collected and offered as reward for the capture of the criminals.

A similar attack occurred at the same place to one of the employees of the Public Ledger five years after Winton was assaulted. Herman Lott was mysteriously kidnapped and beaten in February, 1840. In May of that same year, he was travelling along the same route where Winton had been attacked. Around noon, he was stopped by four hooded men who beat him and knocked him unconscious. When he recovered, he found that his ears had been cut off.²³

²²Public Ledger, (June 2, 1835), p. [2].

²³See: Pedley, History, p. 397.

In the election held during the autumn of 1840, two Roman Catholic candidates were running for a local office in Carbonear, and one man had the backing of the Catholic clergy. By early December, unrest over the election had grown, and a considerable amount of rioting took place in the Carbonear area. Troops had to be sent in to keep peace. During one of the disturbances, a local magistrate was severely beaten.

These three incidents, which occurred in the Carbonear-Harbour Grace area, were more than just isolated acts by local rowdies. These attacks are just one indication of the severity of the rift between Roman Catholics and Protestants in the area, a division that had existed now for many years. Pedley echoed a similar sentiment when he wrote:

But when it is considered that in the first case [Winton's], the criminals were five in number, and that a reward of \$1,500 could not drag one of them from his lair, or lead to his detection; among people many of whom must have known the whole of them - that the second crime [against Lott] was committed by nearly an equal number of wretches in the noonday, close to a town even within a mile of the place where a judge was at that very time holding a Court of Session, - and, that in the third instance [the riot which injured the magistrate], an honoured magistrate and gentleman was, in the exercise of a public and humane duty, all but murdered in the presence of crowds of men who stretched forth no hand to save him, such facts ought to be recorded as true but offensive signs of the spirit of the people and the times.²⁴

²⁴Pedley, History, pp. 399-400.

Sectarianism in the Conception Bay area had become extremely divisive, and hatred and suspicion among various denominations was great. In 1843, an American Anglican clergyman, Robert Traill Spence Lowell, was appointed to serve in the Bay Roberts area of Conception Bay. Lowell later wrote a novel about Newfoundland outport religious life, set in a fictionalized version of Bay Roberts, a town he called Peterport. Lowell attempted to paint a vivid picture of the religious strife between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Anglicans were always allied with the local civic officials, while Catholics were frequently connected with some kind of illegal activity. Lowell also satirized Methodists in his novel. For example, an Anglican resident of Peterport had listened through a window to a funeral sermon at the local Methodist Church. When later asked what he had heard, he replied:

'Abner,' I says, 'there was text out of Scripture; sure,' I says, 'an' a little about how we ought to do,' I says, 'jus' like anybody, an' then varses an' scraps o' poultry, an' such, an' then more, agen, an' so un; but 'e wasn' a proper-growed sarmun, at all,' I says, 'not what I calls proper-growed.' So then he couldn' say nothin'; when I telled un that, 'e couldn' -25

²⁵ Robert Traill Spence Lowell, New Priest in Conception Bay, New Canadian Library No. 101 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), p. 124; for an example of the Anglican campaign against the Methodists that was taking place at approximately the same time in the West Country see: Bishop Lavington, The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Considered (London: A.J. Valpy, 1820).

Lowell's book is filled with standard anti-Catholic themes and discussions. The major plot revolves around the apparent kidnapping of a girl by a Roman Catholic priest. The girl was kept for a short time in a convent by nuns, and the Roman Catholic segment of the population always appears reluctant to cooperate with civil authorities in the investigation. At the close of the book, one of the Roman Catholic priests decides to convert to Anglicanism, realizing the "superstitions" of the Roman Catholic faith. In one scene, he discusses his decision with his superior, and during their conversation, he manages to list all the standard themes used in anti-Catholic crusades at the time. He discusses his personal struggle:

It is a conviction that this system is not of God. This strife within would kill me if I could not get away from it. Woman-worship, - the Confessional, Relics, Images, Violation of Sacraments, Despotism, Superstition, Men abusing the power and character of the priesthood, unquestioned people murderous, licentious and unimproved - nation after nation - wherever this religion has prevailed: whatever morality is in it, whether of priest or people, being in spite of it, and having to fight against the corrupting influence of the system itself, in the idolatrous worship and defiling confessional, and power without check unless by chance! the right hand against the left.²⁶

²⁶Lowell, New Priest, p. 345; for a general discussion of the religious sectarianism that existed in many parts of North America at this time see: Gustavus Myers, A History of Bigotry in the United States, ed. Henry M. Christman (New York: Capricorn Books, 1960); for an example of the anti-Catholic literature which was being published in the early nineteenth century in North America see: Maria Monk, Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk, as

These would be the themes most likely raised by local Protestant clergymen when discussing the assumed errors of Roman Catholicism.

In April, 1861, riots occurred again during elections that were being held in many parts of the island. These disturbances were also largely along sectarian lines and in the Conception Bay area. The riot at Harbour Grace was so severe that no elections could be held there.

During the early settlement of Conception Bay, Irish settled among the English in communities at the heads of the bays. Religious conflict gradually became so intense in many instances that the Irish residents were forced to move up the bays to form new communities, or at least settle in a separate part of the existing community. Thus, for example, Roman Catholics were gradually forced out of Port de Grave in the mid 1800's, and moved up the bay to form the community at North River; in Brigus, there are still sections of the community known as English Town and Irish Town. This division of communities was just one of the final indications of the religious strife which had existed for over a hundred years in this area of Conception Bay.

Exhibited in a Narrative of Her Sufferings during a Residence of Five Years as a Novice; and Two Years as a Black Nun, in the Hotel Dieu Nunnery at Montreal (Wakefield: William Nicholson & Sons; London: S.D. Ewins & Company, ca. 1836).

The cultural and religious history of Conception Bay has been marked by a long series of religious conflicts. Before regular clergymen had arrived, this division was evident, and it continued well into the nineteenth century. This religious strife was not widespread in all regions of Newfoundland, and lack of such conflict on the Southern Shore provides quite a contrast to the troubles in Conception Bay.

The earliest settlements along the Southern Shore were founded by English fishermen, but by the early 1700's Irish settlers were coming to the area. From the beginning of contact, there seems to have been little strife between these two groups, and, in fact, there are even some signs of co-operation. The Irish settlers on the Southern Shore were brought out initially as servants by the English residents who fished along the coast. The Irish settled among the English, and marriages between these two groups took place. Unlike Conception Bay, no reports of extensive conflict were apparently given to governmental officials, and some studies indicate that conflict was rare.²⁷

²⁷ For example, see the comments about the lack of conflict in Bay Bulls in 1732 in: Margaret Chang, "Bay Bulls," mimeographed (St. John's: Memorial University, Department of History, 1969), pp. 31-32. A copy of this paper is available at the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University Library.

Clergymen were not stationed on the Southern Shore until the late 1700's. A Roman Catholic priest was assigned to Ferryland in 1789, and an Anglican clergyman, Rev. Cole, was appointed to serve in Ferryland in 1792. Cole reported to the S.P.G. in 1793 that "his situation was rendered as pleasant as it could be from the great attention and civility of the Inhabitants, and by every kind of assistance, which they have in their power to afford him."²⁸ In spite of the fact that by this time the Anglicans were a minority in Ferryland, Cole reported no hostility from the Roman Catholics.

With this close contact between Anglicans and Roman Catholics, cooperation was apparently common. The number of Anglicans gradually decreased, not because of emigration, but because of their gradual conversion to Roman Catholicism and today, residents with English surnames such as Rossiter and Williams claim Irish ancestry. Whereas all communities contained Anglicans during the early years of settlement, only Aquaforte, Petty Harbour, Bay Bulls and Trepassey now contain Anglicans, and the latter two only in small numbers. While in the Conception Bay area, anti-Catholic feelings led to the establishment of divided communities, Anglicans have been gradually assimilated by the Catholics on the Southern Shore.

²⁸ Lahey, "Newfoundland Material," p. 31.

The comparative absence of extensive religious conflict on the Southern Shore, and its fierceness in the Conception Bay area may be due, at least in part, to the economic conditions that characterized each of these regions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Matthews points out that by 1742, the Irish outnumbered the English winter residents in all harbors between St. John's and Placentia, especially in Ferryland. In the Conception Bay area, however, which contained some of the oldest families on the island, the Irish made up only about twenty per cent of the population.²⁹ The economic status of the Irish immigrants in each of these areas was different. As Matthews claims:

The Irish who came to the Southern Shore or to Placentia during the eighteenth century were basically fishermen who soon owned their own houses, land and fishing equipment; those who flooded into the urban areas of St. John's, Harbour Grace or Carbonear in the early eighteenth century were unskilled, landless and much less adapted to life in Newfoundland.³⁰

Religious strife also seems to have been more prevalent in the Conception Bay area because of the diverse backgrounds of the English settlers, and the rise of Methodism in the

²⁹Keith Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1968), p. 339.

³⁰Keith Matthews, Lectures on the History of Newfoundland, 1500-1830 (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1973), p. 252.

area. While the Southern Shore by 1720 was being settled by English from south Devon, the Conception Bay area was receiving English migrants from north and south Devon, Dorset, the Bristol area, and the Channel Islands. One writer claimed that the absence of Methodism in Dorset made the Dorset settlers in Newfoundland much more hostile to Coughlan and his followers.³¹ It is extremely difficult, however, to trace the religious strife that occurred in the Conception Bay area to religious conditions in England or Ireland,³² and it is equally difficult to explain the

³¹ He wrote: "The English settlers, or their fathers had come mostly from the neighborhood of Poole, or other parts of Dorsetshire; where Methodists were then but little known, and were all churchmen; and now in the land of their sojourn, as they had obtained a minister [Coughlan], they expected he would be like the ministers they had known in England - read prayers to them, and preach on Sunday, and, if he did not join with them he would at least let them alone in their 'innocent amusements'." William Wilson, Newfoundland and its Missionaries, in Two Parts, to which is Added a Chronological Table of All the Important Events that Have Occurred on the Island (Cambridge, Mass.: Daken & Metcalf, 1866), p. 159.

³² For discussions of the religious climate in the West Country during this time see: Rev. George Oliver, Collections, Illustrating the History of the Catholic Religion in the Counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wilts, and Gloucester, in Two Parts, Historical and Biographical, with Notices of the Dominican, Benedictine, & Franciscan Orders in England (London: Charles Dolman, 1857), chapters 1-4; Arthur Warne, Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century Devon (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1969); for Ireland see: Rev. William P. Burke, The Irish Priests in the Penal Times, (1660-1760), from the State Papers in H.M. Record Offices, Dublin and London, the Bodleian Library, and the British Museum (Waterford: N. Harvey, 1914).

harmony on the Southern Shore by the same background.

In the area of Conception Bay surveyed in this study, religious strife touched all levels of society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. New communities were born out of conflict, and older settlements were divided along sectarian lines. And finally, this strife would affect even the burial of the dead, leaving visual signs of the strife that was once raging in most of this area.

Religious conflict in this region of Conception Bay produced factions within each community and even within denominations. This strife would lead to a polarization of groups within communities and the creation of a social distance among these groups. Social distance that existed among the living would extend to community members who were now dead, for their preferences and desires were still considered to be largely those of the living. Just as the social relationships within the community were divided among various religious groups, the burial of the dead also maintained this social structure by choosing physical locations that were spatially separate.

In most of the communities along the Conception Bay area that were surveyed in this study, especially the communities from Colliers to Harbour Grace, burials took place randomly throughout the community before the arrival of a clergyman.³³ Religious strife apparently prevented the

³³ This randomness of graves may account, at least partially, for the ghost narratives in many communities

creation of one common place of burial for each community. The use of one area would have signified a kind of social solidarity in death, reflecting the unified social structure of the living, something which apparently did not exist in this area. Instead, the many gravestones found throughout a community pointed to the social fragmentation that had once existed because of religious strife. The burial of the dead was considered a religious matter, and residents decided to keep separate in death those who were separate in life. By specifically examining one community in this area of Conception Bay, this social distance, as reflected in the grave markers will become clear.

Port de Grave is one of the earliest settled communities in the Conception Bay area, with local tradition claiming that the Dawe family were already living there when John Guy sailed into the bay in 1610.³⁴ English, Irish and Channel Island settlers migrated to the community, and by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Port de Grave had become split by religious conflict. This conflict apparently dominated all areas of social life, including the burial of the dead.

which deal with the disturbance of the dead buried in an unusual place. Houses are frequently reported as haunted because they were built over a grave.

³⁴See: E.R. Seary, G.M. Story, and W.J. Kirwin, *The Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland: An Ethno-Linguistic Study*, National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No. 219 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1968), p. 48.

During field research, eight burial areas were located in Port de Grave, each marked by one or more grave markers, that were used before the establishment of the churches. These markers are located throughout the community, in meadows and yards, separated by varying amounts of physical distance. These sites will be briefly discussed (see map 5).

The first site is located behind a house trailer, and the three gravestones that are located there are partially covered with earth. The oldest stone, dated 1791 (photograph 4), marks the grave of Thomas Butler. His epitaph claims that he was "one of the ancient and respectable Planters of Port de Grave."³⁵ Another stone, dated 1801, marks the grave of Thomas Batten, while the third stone is almost completely covered with earth, and is illegible.

A gravestone marking the place of burial of two drowned young men was located by the roadside near the Port de Grave Post Office (site 2). This stone, dated October 7, 1816, marked the grave of John and Samuel Dawe. When the road was widened several years ago, the stone and the remains were moved to a plot adjoining the Anglican cemetery. Local tradition claims that these two men committed suicide, and they were therefore buried outside the churchyard. Since no church existed in Port de Grave at the time of their death,

³⁵For a discussion of the settlement of the Butler family in Newfoundland, and Thomas Butler specifically, see: A.M. Butler, "The Family of Butler in the New-founde-land," Journal of the Butler Society, 5 (1973-74), pp. 328-338.

LOCATION OF GRAVESTONES IN PORT DE GRAVE - MAP 5

Pre-1860 gravestones

Site 1: Three gravestones behind house trailer.

2: Former location of gravestone near Post Office.

3: Three gravestones at Sandy Cove.

4: John Daw burial ground

5: Israel Daw's meadow.

6: Abraham Richards gravestone in meadow.

7: Roman Catholic burial ground.

8: Former location of James Furnaux stone.

Post-1860 burial grounds

9: United Church cemetery.

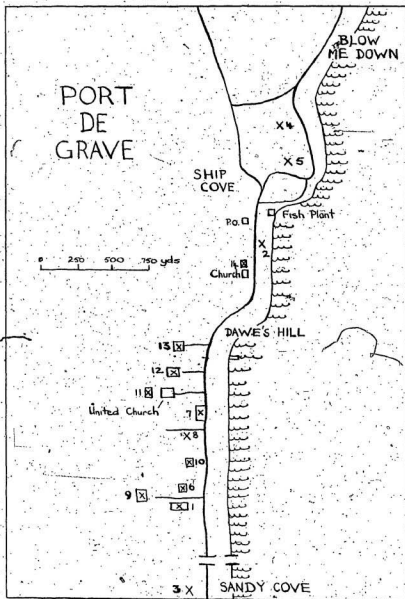
10: Hussey's cemetery.

11: United Church cemetery behind church.

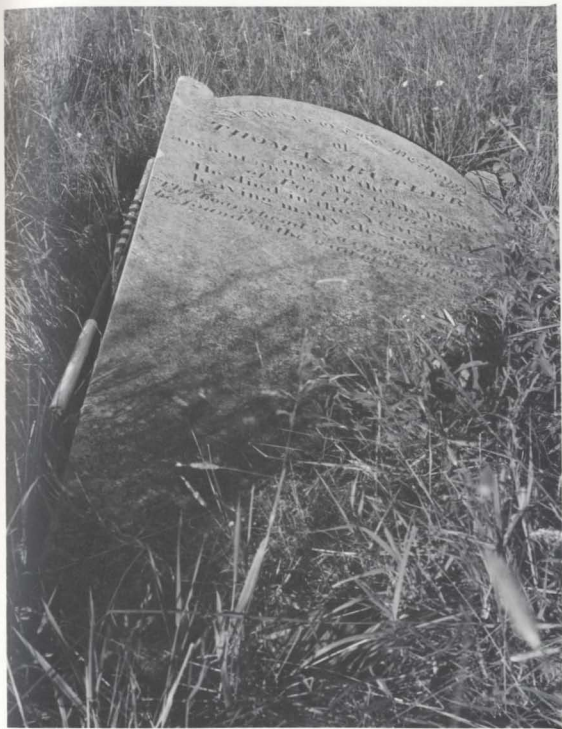
12: Bussey's cemetery.

13: Butler's cemetery.

14: Anglican cemetery.



Map 5. Burial sites marked by gravestones in Port de Grave.



Photograph 4. Thomas Butler stone, dated 1794,
Port de Grave.

this legend may be an attempt to explain the placement of the stone and the burial itself at the roadside to future generations who expected burial to take place within an approved area.

At the western end of Port de Grave, in an area called Sandy Cove, there are three gravestones (site 3) overlooking the bay (photograph 1, p. xxiii). The earliest, dated March 1, 1820, was most likely carved in Dartmouth, Devon, and marks the grave of John Mugford (the stone on the right in the photograph). The stone on the left, dated August 22, 1820, marks the grave of Samuel Mugford, while the third stone, dated May 20, 1823, commemorates another Mugford, probably Anthony.

In a meadow in the central portion of Port de Grave (site 4), a small plot contains several rough unmarked stones, and one professionally carved headstone. This stone marks the grave of John Dawe, who died September 1, 1821, and his wife Ann, who died August 10, 1825. Nearby is another meadow which contains two professionally carved headstones (site 5). One of these stones was carved by Woodley of St. Mary Church, Devon.

A meadow adjacent to the road in the western portion of Port de Grave (site 6) contains a stone which marks the grave of Abraham Richards, who died in October, 1824 (photograph 5). Only the top of this stone was visible during the summer from the road because of the high grass. During one of my visits, I saw the top of this stone from my car, and



Photograph 5. Abraham Richards stone, dated October, 1824, Port de Grave.

stopped to investigate. When I found that it was a grave-stone, I informed several of the local residents who were assisting me in my field research of my discovery. They were all quite surprised, and did not know of the existence of this stone.

The gravestones in Port de Grave discussed until now mark the burial places of English settlers, who most likely were Protestant. The form of the epitaphs and decorative carving all indicate non-Catholic burials, although it is not possible to distinguish between Anglican and Methodist gravestones.

In the central portion of Port de Grave, a small burial ground was established by Roman Catholics (site 7), and five gravestones are located there that date before 1860. The earliest stone marks the grave of Daniel Conners, who died April 4, 1816 (photograph 6). Early stones also mark the graves of Thomas Dunn, who died May 23, 1819, and Richard Shea, who died April 4, 1826 (photograph 7). The dimensions and design of all three of these early Roman Catholic stones are identical, and they were all probably made by the same craftsman in the Waterford area of Ireland. Many stones in this cemetery have been vandalized; such as the Mary Ann Morrissey stone, dated September 6, 1849 (photograph 8).

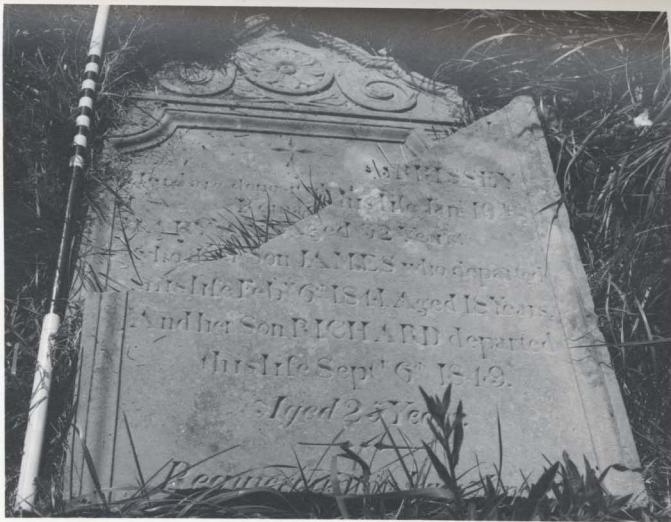
One gravestone was reported by local residents which recently was removed. This gravestone, located next to a foot path, marked the grave of one of the first teachers in



Photograph 6. Daniel Connors stone, dated April 4, 1816, Port de Grave.



Photograph 7. Richard Shea stone, dated April 4, 1826, Port de Grave.



Photograph 8. Mary Ann Morrissey stone, dated September 6, 1849, Port de Grave.

Port de Grave, James Furnaux (site 8). The marker was dated in the 1830's, and, according to local reports was removed about three years ago. No reason was given for its removal.

By 1828, an Anglican clergyman was stationed in Port de Grave, and an organized burial ground was established around the church.³⁶ During the early nineteenth century, the Methodists and Roman Catholics also established churches and specific places of burial. The strife between the Roman Catholics and Protestants, however, remained quite intense, and gradually forced all the Roman Catholics out of the community. By 1901, the census indicated that no Roman Catholics remained in Port de Grave.³⁷ Only the small cemetery located in the center of the community still speaks of the time when Roman Catholics were present in the midst of community social life. When Catholics from Port de Grave travelled up the bay to found the community of North River, they even moved their chapel from the center of Port de Grave to the new settlement.

The spatial separation among various religious groups in Port de Grave was exhibited initially in the lack of

³⁶ See: R.A. Andrews, "Port de Grave (1968): Its Religious, Occupational and Surname Structure," mimeographed (St. John's: Memorial University, Department of Geography, 1968), pp. 6-7; a copy of this paper can be found in the Centre for Newfoundland Studies in the Memorial University Library.

³⁷ Ibid., (p. 6.

social contact among these groups, and later in the creation of specific residential sections inhabited by each denomination.³⁸ Before the arrival of the churches and the establishment of strict guidelines for burial, the spatial distance maintained among members of the community extended to the dead.³⁹ The extreme end result of this spatial separation was the migration of the Roman Catholics out of the community.

The lack of conflict between Protestants and Roman Catholics in communities along the Southern Shore provides a contrast to conditions in Conception Bay; this lack of conflict is reflected in the choice of the pattern of burial. In all communities along the Southern Shore, social cooperation in life apparently was accompanied by a similar cooperation in death, for each community decided to bury their dead within one physical area. Denominational beliefs

³⁸ Andrews, "Port de Grave," pp. 7-8.

³⁹ In his study of southern Illinois, Price devised four "cemetery types": undifferentiated, containing ten graves or less; small family plot, twenty graves or less; rural activity focus, 250 graves or less; population center, 250 graves or more. These types were used chronologically, and he points out that undifferentiated and small family plots were initially used because farmers could not afford to transport a body to a central burial place, and would prefer instead to bury the dead on nearby land. In the Conception Bay area, distances among homes in a community were not great, and one common burial ground could have been established, as in Southern Shore communities. Other factors must have influenced this decision to separate the dead. See: Larry W. Price, "Some Results and Implications of a Cemetery Study," Professional Geographer, 18 (1966), pp. 201-207.

did not separate English and Irish in death, and both groups used one cemetery. The decision to use one common area had to be made by members of the community, since no clergymen were present to supervise this aspect of religious and social life. This choice, therefore, was made directly by local residents, and enabled them to express in death what existed in life. It is just as important to realize that the use of common cemeteries on the Southern Shore reflected social cooperation, as the use of separate burials in the Conception Bay area points to the religious strife. This strife has been well documented in the Conception Bay area, but little has been written about the cooperation between English and Irish on the Southern Shore. The use of a common cemetery in each community, arising from a local decision, is one of the few examples of tangible evidence that this cooperation was extensive. By using the early place of burial in one community on the Southern Shore as an example, the pattern in the entire region will be obvious. The community that will be examined is Brigus South.

Brigus South has been engaged in the fishery since the early seventeenth century, containing residents since at least 1660. Following the early settlement pattern along much of the English Shore, the settlers that first lived at Brigus South chose to live in a cove close to the ocean, enabling them to travel to the fishing grounds in a

shorter time.⁴⁰

The English settled in Brigus South first, later followed by the Irish, and a community place of burial was established to contain both denominations. The cemetery was located on a hill overlooking both the community and the sea. Irish and English were buried side by side, and no separation in the cemetery occurred between the two groups.⁴¹ This lack of division even within the cemetery is obvious from the placement of burials, marked by grave-stones containing surnames and inscriptions which relate to each of the two groups of settlers.

In any study of denominational affiliation, it is extremely difficult to base sectarianism on ethnic origin.

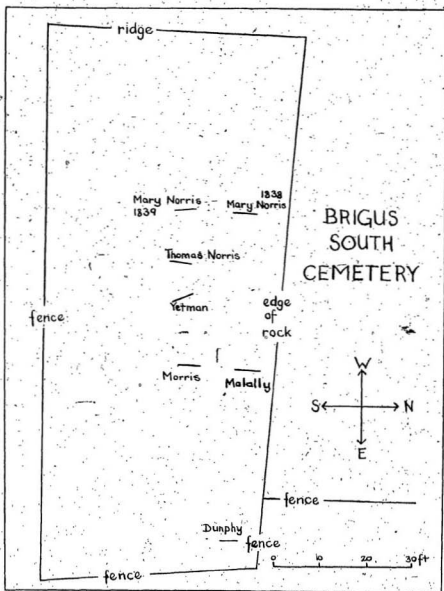
⁴⁰Settlement by the open sea may have also been desirable from a military standpoint, since vessels were less likely to be trapped in a cove near the ocean than in a deep harbor several miles in length.

⁴¹Cf. a decree issued in 1635 by the Roman Catholic Church dealing with the burial of Catholics in non-Catholic cemeteries. This decree stated that: "wherever Catholics could not have a separate cemetery, provision should be made for them to have a specially defined section of the common cemetery. This section was to be blessed and to have all the privileges of a blessed cemetery. It was to have also a separate entrance, thus likening it as near as possible to an exclusively Catholic cemetery." Rev. Cornelius M. Power, The Blessing of Cemeteries: An Historical Synopsis and Commentary, Catholic University of America Canon Law Studies No. 185 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1943), pp. 25-26; also see: S. Woywod, "Burial of Catholics in Non-Catholic Cemeteries," Homiletic and Pastoral Review, 37 (1936-37), pp. 79-81.

In Newfoundland, this is especially the case. Early settlers to the island came either from the West Country or southeastern Ireland. A great deal of migration also took place between southeastern Ireland and parts of England, and English surnames, as well as customs, are found in the Waterford-Wexford area.⁴² With the absence of clergymen during so much of Newfoundland's early settlement, English Anglicans and Irish Catholics practised no organized religion. This lack of clergymen left many residents more susceptible to conversion at the hands of visiting missionaries. In spite of these difficulties, it is possible, using both printed works and the inscriptions on the gravestones, to determine with little doubt at least the professed denomination of the dead buried in the cemetery at Brigus South.

Seven gravestones are still extant in the cemetery at Brigus South carved before 1860 which contain surnames and dates of death. The location of these gravestones in the cemetery (map 6), and the presence of other small unmarked stones, indicates that this burial ground was used quite extensively, and these seven remaining stones are only a proportion of the total number of burials which took place in this cemetery.

⁴² For example, mumming plays introduced from England were common in southeastern Ireland; for comments see: William Smith Clark, The Early Irish Stage: The Beginnings to 1720 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 4.



Map 6. Brigus South Cemetery.

The earliest marked stone in this cemetery is dated June 14, 1750, and has badly deteriorated (photograph 9). According to Francis Power, whose land is located adjacent to this burial ground, this gravestone used to contain the name Yetman, most likely an Englishman. Three other stones are found in the cemetery which mark the graves of English settlers. These three stones mark the graves of Norrises (photograph 10 shows one stone). This surname appears in England, but not in Ireland,⁴³ and this fact, combined with the absence of a cross or "Requiescat in pace" on these stones strongly indicates that the Norrises were Protestant.

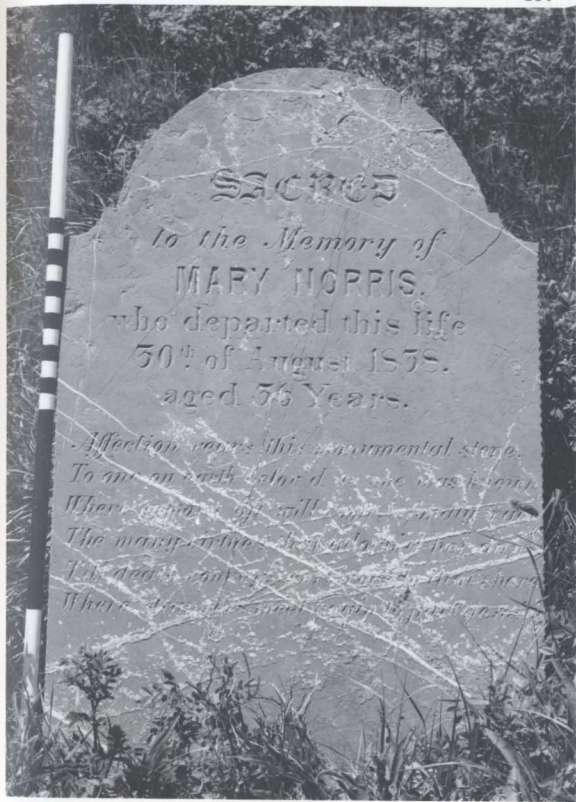
Three gravestones are found in this cemetery which mark the graves of Irish Catholics. The earliest stone, dated November 1, 1778, commemorates Mary Malally (photograph 11). The cross on the stone, the "I H S" and the "Requiescat in pace" clearly indicate that she was a Catholic. The next stone, dated September, 1809, marks the grave of Will. Morris. Although this name is found in both England and Ireland,⁴⁴ the place of birth is contained in

⁴³ For early English examples of this name see: Charles Wareing Bardsley, A Dictionary of English and Welsh Surnames, with Special American Instances (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1968), p. 561; P.H. Reaney, A Dictionary of British Surnames (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 231; this name is apparently not found in Ireland; see: Edward MacLysaght, Irish Families: Their Names, Arms and Origins (Dublin: Allen Figgis, 1972).

⁴⁴ Bardsley, Dictionary, p. 541; Reaney, Dictionary, p. 217; MacLysaght, Irish Families, p. 231.



Photograph 9. Yetman stone, dated June 4, 1750, Brigus South.



Photograph 10. Mary Norris stone, dated August 30, 1838, Brigus South.

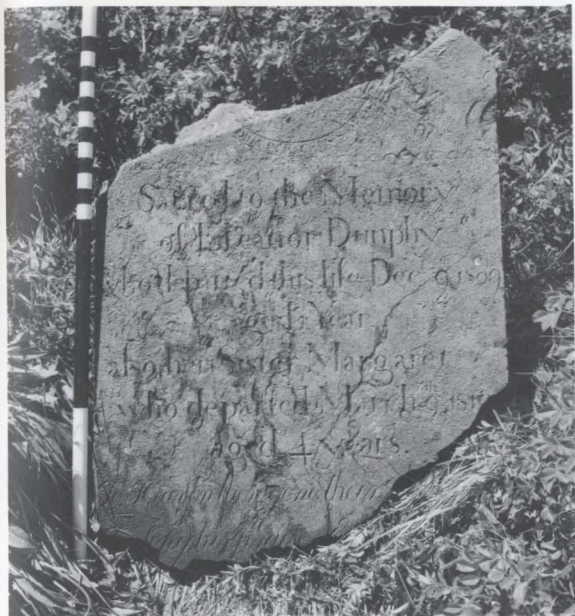


Photograph 11. Mary Malally stone, dated November 1, 1778, Brigus South.

the inscription, "C. Wexford, Ireland." Her religion is also fairly obvious, since "Lord have mercy on his soul. Amen"⁴⁵ appears at the bottom of the marker, and was commonly used as an epitaph on Catholic graves. A gravestone in poor condition, dated March 9, 1810, marks the grave of two Dunphy children, Eleanor and Margaret (photograph 12). This surname is Irish, and the partially legible inscription at the top of the stone, "Gloria in Excelsis Deo," frequently appears on stones marking the graves of Roman Catholics, and rarely on those of other denominations.

In Brigus South, as in most Newfoundland communities, availability of land was never a determining factor in the establishment of early places of burial. In all communities along the Southern Shore, enough land was available to establish two burial places, one English and one Irish, within the community. Yet, the fact that such dual areas were not established, in the light of religious conflicts between these two groups in the British Isles, indicates at least some degree of cooperation between them in Newfoundland. The English most likely had designated this specific area in Brigus South as a burial ground, and when the Irish

⁴⁵ This person's Christian name was abbreviated as Will., and could be short for Willena. The inscription states that this stone "was erected by Elizabeth Morris & Mary Blakem in memory of their mother Will. Morris." The "Lord have mercy on his soul" may refer to Pat Morris who is also mentioned on this stone.



Photograph 12. Eleanor and Margaret Dunphy stone,
 dated March 9, 1810, Brigus South.

began to settle in the community, they also used this same place of burial. Apparently there was no feeling that separation between these two groups should occur in death. If religious conflict along the Southern Shore were extreme, then the various factions would most likely have been kept apart in death, as in Conception Bay.

A gravestone located in the early cemetery at Port Kirwan indicates to a large extent the cooperation that took place on much of the Southern Shore. A stone dated November 1, 1819, marks the grave of Bridget Aylward. Although Aylward is an English surname, the epitaph on the bottom of the stone contains the Roman Catholic prayer for the dead, "Requiescat in pace, Amen." Finally, the stone was carved by a mason in Devon. Thus, this stone contains a Roman Catholic epitaph, marks the grave of a person with an English surname, and was carved by an English mason. Bridget Aylward may have been Irish and married an Englishman in Newfoundland, still keeping her professed religion.

With the arrival of clergymen in both regions, burial practices became rigidly controlled. The local church established a specific place of burial for all members of the particular denomination, and burial in this place became mandatory.⁴⁶ Many churches stressed the belief that the

⁴⁶ In the United States, the dead have the legal right to religious segregation, and burial of members of other denominations can be prohibited; see: R.S., "The Cemetery Lot: Rights and Restrictions," University of Pennsylvania Law Review and American Law Register, 109 (1961), pp. 391-393.

place of burial was consecrated ground to enforce this practice, and the need for burial in these sacred places controlled by the church replaced the need for burial in areas of the community chosen by local custom and belief. To insure the happiness of the dead, they now had to be placed in consecrated ground, instead of community-designated areas, and this need for burial in places considered sacred has a long history of development in the Western world. A survey of the development of this concept will be useful in the understanding of the traditions in Newfoundland dealing with burial in consecrated ground.⁴⁷

The belief that the place of burial possessed a sacred character has a long tradition in the West. The Jews, for example, had held this belief for thousands of years,⁴⁸ and the Romans also considered their place of burial as sacred.

As Power points out:

The Romans had even a distinct ceremony for transforming burial plots into religious places, Cicero (106-43 B.C.) stated in his *De Legibus* that it was to the pagan priests that the Roman people confided the right to render to their dead the last honors; it was to the priests that they gave the right of throwing in the handful of earth ("iniectio glebae") into the grave. It was the priests who by symbolic rites gave the place of sepulture all the rights, immunities and privileges of

⁴⁷ For a historical survey of this concept see: Raymond W.L. Muncey, *A History of the Consecration of Churches and Churchyards* (Cambridge, Eng.: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1930), pp. 124-153.

⁴⁸ See: Gen. 23; 24: 19-20; Eccles. 38: 16ff; Tob. 2:9; 12: 12ff.

religious places. Religion was intimately bound up with the Roman burial and with the place of burial.⁴⁹

The place of burial could be consecrated to a god or goddess, and thus the entire place became a "locus sacer."

The first specific mention of the Christian consecration of cemeteries appeared in a letter written to Gregory, Bishop of Tours, in the sixth century A.D. An abbess of the monastery of Poitiers complained that the burial of the queen of the Franks could not take place, writing:

What shall we do when the bishop of the city cannot come, and the place where Radegunde ought to be buried is not as yet consecrated with the sacerdotal blessing.⁵⁰

Gregory left Tours in order to bless the place of burial.

The official blessing of the church was now necessary to insure the sacred nature of the place of burial. Through this action, the sacredness of the ground came not from the bodies placed in it, but rather from the power of the church. Only through the rites of the church could the place of burial be considered holy, where once the very nature of the dead, in their higher and more powerful state, brought about this sacredness.

The ritual consecration of the place of burial was performed by both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches,

⁴⁹ Power, Blessing, p. 6.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 23.

and this rite officially sanctioned this place as sacred.⁵¹ The belief that it was necessary to be buried in consecrated ground in order to insure future happiness became widespread, and by the twelfth century, the Church expected "all baptized persons could and should be buried in sacred ground unless they were specifically prohibited by law."⁵² Heavenly reward was more easily obtainable if burial took place in sacred ground.

The need for burial in sacred ground enabled the church to exercise a certain amount of control over community social life. Suicides, murderers, unbaptized children, and members of another religion were all prohibited from burial in consecrated ground, and would therefore be deprived of the necessary rites of separation that would bring them happiness in the next world. As van Gennep points out:

Like children who have not been baptized, named, or initiated, persons for whom funeral rites are not performed are condemned to a pitiable existence,

⁵¹For a description of the Roman Catholic consecration ritual see: Benedictine Monks, "The Consecration of a Cemetery," Homiletic and Pastoral Review, 30 (1929-30), pp. 979-982; Herbert Thurston, "Consecration of Cemeteries," Catholic Encyclopaedia, (1908), III, 508.

⁵²Power, Blessing, p. 25; for a recent article by a Roman Catholic clergyman which discusses the necessity of being buried in consecrated ground see: Rev. Msgr. Thomas E. Simons, "Cemeteries and the Canon Law," American Cemetery (October, 1961), pp. 44-45.

since they are never able to enter the world of the dead or to become incorporated in the society established there.⁵³

By prohibiting the burial in consecrated ground of persons who directly or indirectly committed certain acts, the church could hope to lessen the occurrence of these social disruptions. The need for burial in consecrated ground, unknown in most communities in Newfoundland until the early nineteenth century, replaced many of the older traditions concerning the place of burial in each outport.

With the arrival of the churches, the need for burial in consecrated ground became widely accepted. This need, in a sense, replaced the former need for burial on a hill or some other location within the community. The basic attitude remained the same--the burial of the dead took certain forms which lessened the disruptiveness of death by enabling the living to show their concern for the dead. Through the choice of a consecrated place for burial, the living were able not only to show their respect for the dead. They also insured that they would not be harmed by the return of the dead, which would be caused by the failure of the living to follow the social and ecclesiastical rules for burial.

⁵³ Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 160.

The need for burial in consecrated ground, while having a long tradition in the history of the Anglican and Catholic churches, became accepted only recently in most Newfoundland communities. In spite of its recent nature, this need has played an active part in the community's continued symbolic contact with its dead. The need for this type of burial has led, in some cases, to the creation of traditions quite apart from the teachings of the church, reinterpreting external norms according to local viewpoints.

Certain types of social and religious deviants were excluded from burial in consecrated ground, specifically, murderers, suicides and unbaptized children.⁵⁴ This prohibition symbolically excluded these dead from a future state of happiness, and they were believed to be condemned to a restless existence on earth. For example, a woman from Elliston reported that:

Suicides or unbaptized children were not granted burial in consecrated ground in the old days. I learnt recently that our meadow in Maberly contains the grave of a tiny still-born child. In a garden in Sandy Cove rests a poor Catholic woman. She became insane and in her disturbed state slit her wrists. In spite of the circumstances of her death and the loneliness of the location of her grave, I

⁵⁴For a Roman Catholic statement concerning these exclusions see: James H. Murphy, "Parish Priests and Christian Burial," American Ecclesiastical Review, 67 (1922), pp. 12-25.

have never heard of anyone's having "seen" her.
Many people hated to pass that way alone at night
though.⁵⁵

Condemnation to a grave outside consecrated ground, i.e.,
the community churchyard or cemetery, could mean a grave
removed from the rest of the community of the dead. This

⁵⁵ MUNFLA 70-21/22 MS; for examples of the constant return of the ghost of a murderer, see: Robert Hunt, Popular Romances of the West of England, or the Drolls, Traditions, and Superstitions of Old Cornwall (3rd ed., London: Chatto & Windus, 1903), p. 289; Charles M. Skinner, American Myths and Legends (Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1903), II, 241-242; for suicides see: Wirt Sikes, British Goblins: Welsh Folk-Lore, Fairy Mythology, Legends and Traditions (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1881), p. 179; Michael A. Denham, The Denham Tracts: A Collection of Folklore by Michael Aislalie Denham, and Reprinted from the Original Tracts and Pamphlets Printed by Mr. Denham between 1846 and 1859, ed. James Hardy, Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, No. 35 (London: David Nutt, 1895), II, 164; Mrs. Eliza Gutch, County Folk-Lore, Vol. VI: Examples of Printed Folk-Lore Concerning the East Riding of Yorkshire, Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, 69 (London: David Nutt, 1912), pp. 42; 50; Hunt, Popular Romances, p. 354; Eveline Camilla Gurdon, County Folk-Lore, Vol. I: Printed Extracts No. 2: Suffolk, Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, 37 (London: David Nutt, 1893), p. 93; Percy Manning, "Stray Notes on Oxfordshire Folklore," Folk-Lore, 14 (1903), p. 67; Ethel H. Rudkin, "Collectanea: Lincolnshire Folklore," Folk-Lore, 44 (1933), p. 205; Charles M. Skinner, Myths and Legends of Our Own Land (3rd edition; Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1896), I, 80-82; Edwin Sidney Hartland, The Science of Fairy Tales: An Inquiry into Fairy Mythology (London: Walter Scott, 1891), p. 238; Arthur Huff Fauset, "Tales and Riddles Collected in Philadelphia," Journal of American Folklore, 41 (1928), p. 546; Robert Chambers, Popular Rhymes of Scotland (3rd edition; Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers; London: W.S. Orr; Dublin: J. M'Glashan, 1847), p. 47; Rosalie Hankey, "California Ghosts," California Folklore Quarterly, 1 (1942), p. 165; for unbaptized children see: William Henderson, Notes on the Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties of England and the Borders, Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, 2 (2nd ed.; London: W. Satchell, Peyton & Co., 1879), p. 133; Sean O'Suilleabhain, "Sceálta Craibhtheacha," Bealoideas, 21 (1951-52), p. 315.

removal might be to a lonely place, where the company of other dead would be absent. Conversely, in England, for example, these unsanctified dead would often be buried at a crossroads.⁵⁶ The constant flow of traffic above the body would apparently prevent it from achieving proper rest. These were also places of uncertainty and fear, which would also prohibit the dead from resting.

The belief in the need for burial in consecrated ground was quite strong, a need motivated at least in part by the desire of the living to indicate their deference to the needs of their dead by providing burial in a sacred

⁵⁶For examples of suicides being buried at a crossroads see: Manning, "Stray Notes," p. 73; Sydney Moorhouse, "Wayside Graves," Monumental & Architectural Journal, 7 (1940), p. 196; Frederick Burgess, "Graves and Burials in Literature: A Brief Anthology," Monumental Journal, 28 (1961), p. 228; Enid Porter, The Folklore of East Anglia (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1974), p. 40; T.F. Thiselton-Dyer, Old English Social Life as Told by the Parish Registers (London: Elliot Stock, 1898), p. 150; Rev. J. Edward Vaux, Church Folklore: A Record of Some Post-Reformation Usages in the English Church, Now Mostly Obsolete (London: Griffith Farran & Co., 1894), p. 154; for comments about the Irish belief that suicides should be excluded from the cemetery see: Charles R. Browne, "Ethnography of Inishbofin and Inishshark, County Galway," Royal Irish Academy, Proceedings, ser. 3, 3 (1894), p. 352; for an example of an excommunicated man being excluded from the cemetery see: John Southerden Burn, The History of the Parish Registers in England, also of the Registers of Scotland, Ireland, the East and West Indies, the Dissenters, and the Episcopal Chapels in and about London, with Observations on Bishops' Transcripts, and the Provisions of the Act of the 52nd, George III, Cap. 146 (London: John Russell Smith, 1862), p. 114.

area. Efforts were made to insure this type of burial in order to assist the dead in achieving future happiness. An incident that occurred in Pouch Cove about thirty years ago indicates the strength of this need.

A local resident of Pouch Cove related that when he was young, a fisherman from the community was drowned during the fall, and his body could not be located before the harbour froze. In the spring, a body was discovered floating in the bay. It was badly decomposed, and could not be identified. A canvas sail was slipped under it, and it was lifted from the water. The body was going to be buried outside the churchyard, since it could not be identified. The widow of the drowned fisherman, however, insisted that this was her husband's body, and that it should be buried in consecrated ground. No positive identification could be made, but residents finally decided to yield to the widow's pleadings, and the body was buried in the corner of the churchyard. The grave, they agreed, was to remain unmarked, enabling the ground, in the mind of the residents, to maintain its sacred character.

According to the church, the sacred nature of the place of burial came from its own blessing. Local traditions, however, often modified ecclesiastical teaching to include the idea that this sacred character came from the dead themselves who were placed in the ground. The earth

itself became sacred,⁵⁷ and was often believed to contain curative powers.⁵⁸ If the soil contained a sacred nature, then plants growing in it would also be considered sacred. To disturb these objects and plants above ground would disturb the dead themselves. In Newfoundland, blueberries are frequently mentioned when this taboo is discussed.

Blueberries grow wild in many parts of the island, and are often found in unkept cemeteries. In the Anglican cemetery in Bishop's Cove, for example, the ground was covered with low bushes full of ripe berries during field work in August. When two young girls told their mother that they were going blueberry picking in the cemetery,

⁵⁷ For example, a reader of Notes and Queries in England wrote a disturbed letter which indicated his literal belief in the concept of "sacred ground": "In a rural village the churchwardens are levelling, as they call it, the churchyard. A great quantity of the consecrated earth, not unmingled with bones, is thrown over the wall and sold to the farmers at twopence per load. 'Query. Is this lawful?' W. A., 'Churchyard,' Notes and Queries, series 1, No. 150 (September 11, 1852), p. 245. No response was forthcoming.

⁵⁸ For cures involving dirt from a cemetery see: George D. Hendricks, comp., Mirrors, Mice and Mustaches: A Sampling of Superstition and Popular Beliefs in Texas, Paisano Books, No. 1 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1966), p. 56; Harry Middleton Hyatt, Folk-Lore from Adams County, Illinois (2nd ed.: Hannibal, Mo.: Alma Egan Hyatt Foundation, 1965), p. 302, # 6576; Vaux, Church Folklore, p. 308; Rev. R. Wilkins Rees, "Church and Churchyard Charms and Cures," in William Andrews, ed., Antiquities and Curiosities of the Church (London: William Andrews & Co., 1897), pp. 236-255; E. Estyn Evans, Irish Heritage: The Landscape, the People and their Work (Dundalk: W. Tempset, Dundalgan Press, 1967), p. 166; Mimi Clär, "Graveyard Dirt Cure," Western Folklore, 16 (1957), p. 211.

she emphatically responded, "No! They're poison!," referring to the blueberries. A resident of Bishop's Falls reported the same belief:

When we were children we often times went berry picking on the hill on which the cemetery is located and heeding our grandparents' words, we would never attempt to pick the blueberries that grew within close range of the cemetery. We figured that these berries were blessed and sacred and if we picked them we would surely meet with some disaster during the year. Most of us believed that we would lose some member of our family. I often went berry picking from the ages of eight until about fourteen (1956-64) and never once would I attempt to venture near the graveyard to pick berries.⁵⁹

The removal of any objects from a cemetery was also taboo, and again, this action would disturb the dead. A resident of Grand Falls, for example, reported that as a child he once picked flowers from a cemetery and brought them home with him. His father became very upset when he noticed this, and angrily demanded that the child throw them away.⁶⁰ A resident of Bishop's Falls also mentioned that "my grandfather always told me it is bad luck to carry anything out of a graveyard."⁶¹

⁵⁹ MUNFLA 71-32/92 MS.

⁶⁰ MUNFLA 71-12/24 MSC.

⁶¹ MUNFLA 71-32/92 MS. A writer in nineteenth century Cornwall reported that: "to pluck branches or blooms from any shrubs or flowers planted in a churchyard is considered unlucky; and it is alleged that ghosts from the despoiled ground will haunt the house of the depredation" (Rev. George S. Tyack, Lore and Legend of the English Church [London: William Andrews & Co., 1899], p. 57); also see: Newman Ivey White, ed., The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Vol. VII: Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from North Carolina,

The cemetery is considered as the sacred space containing the community of the dead, and its boundaries are frequently delineated quite clearly to indicate the presence of this space. Cemeteries in Newfoundland are often bordered by fences, and this boundary indicates the division between sacred and non-sacred space. The fence encloses all that is sacred, even though the actual physical appearance of the ground is not different. In one case, this belief was carried to its logical extreme. A resident of Elliston reported:

Another suicide, an old man who tied two fifty-six pound weights around himself and then jumped over his own stage-head, was not granted burial in the graveyard. He was buried just outside by the fence. Later his relatives surreptitiously altered the line of the fence to include his grave inside the yard.⁶²

Even though the community refused burial in consecrated ground, relatives could on this occasion provide this necessity by moving the fence, and therefore apparently extending the sacred space of the cemetery.

ed. Wayland D. Hand (Durham: Duke University Press, 1964), p. 94, # 5496; Paul Geiger, "Grabblumer," in E. Hoffmann-Krayer and Hanns Bächtold-Stäubli, *Handwörterbuch des Deutschen Aberglaubens* (Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1930-31), III, 1103-1106; Hendricks, *Mirrors, Mice*, p. 80; Hyatt, *Folk-Lore*, p. 713, # 15402; Daniel Lindsey Thomas and Lucy Blayne Thomas, *Kentucky Superstitions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1920), p. 74, # 773; Earl J. Stout, *Folklore from Iowa, Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society*, Vol. 29 (New York: American Folk-Lore Society, 1936), p. 151, # 169.

⁶²MUNFLA 70-21/22 MS; cf.: "Enlarging of Cemeteries and Consecration," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, 36 (1936), pp. 971-972.

The construction of elaborate gates as entrances to cemeteries, a custom widespread in England,⁶³ is virtually unknown in Newfoundland. Simple gates are used, or some type of stylized marker may be placed at the entrance, such as the entrance to the new cemetery in Bay Bulls (photograph 13).

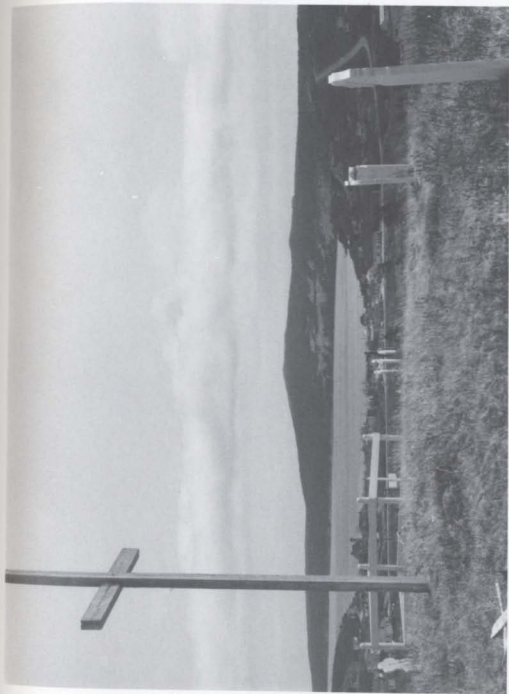
Large crosses were often placed in cemeteries, usually those used by Roman Catholics.⁶⁴ These crosses would be located in the center of the cemetery, or off to one side (see photograph 14, for an example, of a cemetery cross in Bay Bulls). The churches usually gave a theological reason for the erection of these crosses. In Staffordshire, England, for example, a writer explained that:

⁶³For a discussion of the English tradition see: Tyack, Lore and Legend, pp. 67-68; Pamela Gover, "Country Churchyards: Some Glimpses into the Past," Commemorative Art, 33 (1966), p. 192; T.F. Thiselton Dyer, Church-Lore Gleanings (London: A.D. Innes and Co., 1892), pp. 154-157; for examples in New England see: Harriette M. Forbes, "Symbolic Cemetery Gates in New England," Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Old-Time New England, 24 (1933), pp. 46-58.

⁶⁴The absence of churchyard crosses in Anglican burial grounds in Newfoundland may be due in part to a strong anti-Catholic sentiment that would associate the cross with Roman Catholic beliefs. Churchyard crosses were common in Anglican burial grounds in England; for a discussion of typical crosses used in England see: Gover, "Country Churchyards," p. 188; Florence Peacock, "Concerning Crosses," in William Andrews, ed., Curious Church Gleanings (Hull: William Andrews & Co.; London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1896), pp. 65-91; Church of England. Central Council for the Care of Churches, The Care of Churchyards (Westminster: Press and Publications Board of the Church Assembly, 1930), pp. 15-17.



Photograph 13. Entrance marker at the new cemetery, Bay Bulls.



Photograph 14. Cemetery cross, Bay Bulls.

The reason for the employment of this Christian symbol in a churchyard is fairly obvious. It is the symbol of life in death, of love in loneliness, of hope in despair, uplifted of Him who died that others may live) to the eye of the bereaved it sends forth a cheering ray of hope for future reunion. . . . erected by the authority of the Church, their purpose was to give sanctity to the churchyard, and anciently it was believed that the nearer one was buried to the cross, the earlier would be the escape from Purgatory.⁶⁵

Local residents, though, would often put forth an explanation shaped by their own local traditions. A former resident of Merasheen claimed that:

Every graveyard in the area of Merasheen had a prominent six foot wooden cross. The belief goes that Christ was exactly six feet tall, and the only man who ever attained this exactly.⁶⁶

With the introduction of local burial restrictions, and the liberalization of many of the churches' laws regarding burial, the interment of the dead within a place considered sacred is almost insured. Even when a desire is expressed to be buried outside the community cemetery, rarely is this now permitted. One woman in Port de Grave, for example, wanted to be buried in a small plot in her yard that was used years ago by her family. She was prohibited from using this place of burial for health reasons, and had to be interred in the local United Church cemetery.

⁶⁵ Frederick William Hackwood, Staffordshire Customs, Superstitions and Folklore (Lichfield: Mercury Press, 1924), p. 85.

⁶⁶ MUNFLA 69-8/104 MS.

Just as the church replaced the community choice of the place of burial with the need for burial in consecrated ground, so, too, have social and legal restrictions altered church norms as to who may be admitted into consecrated ground. Church traditions replaced local traditions, and legal restrictions have now modified church traditions which were, at times, reinterpreted by the community.

During the period of early settlement in Newfoundland communities, local residents decided where they would place their individual dead within the community, and whether the dead should be located in one place or in separate places. The living could decide which social spaces that existed in life should be maintained through a similar segregation in death.

Many Conception Bay communities were filled with religious strife, and became divided into various factions. When the dead were to be buried, the living decided to continue these divisions by using burial plots scattered throughout the community. Residents of Southern Shore communities, on the other hand, felt that their dead should be placed in one common cemetery, and this grouping together of the dead may reflect at least partially the cooperation between English and Irish settlers in these communities.

Changing religious attitudes and social conditions have lessened the belief in the need for burial in sacred

ground. This belief still exists, but burial within an area sanctioned by the church is almost completely insured. For example, a resident of Portugal Cove noted the recent changes connected with burial in consecrated ground, relating:

Till a decade or so ago, children dying before receiving baptismal rites were buried just outside the fences of the R.C. cemetery. It is estimated that 50 children are buried outside the fences and on the lands formerly held by John Travers who apparently took no objection to such children "limbo-ing" in his horse pasture.⁶⁷

With the location and social grouping of the place of burial largely controlled by the churches, the living narrowed their spatial focus to the individual place of burial, the grave, and its position within the cemetery, as a means of expressing a contact with the dead, and the subsequent lessening of the social disruptiveness of death. Through the use of space among the graves, and the correct orientation of the grave with respect to the cardinal points of the compass, the living could express their need for contact with the dead. These specific traditions will be discussed next.

⁶⁷ MUNFLA Q74B-17-3.

CHAPTER VI

THE USE OF SPACE AMONG GRAVES

The creation of a place of burial establishes a group of graves which have a particular spatial relationship among them. This relationship is indicated by how much distance is allowed between two particular graves, and by the conscious delineation of spatial distances on the surface of the ground among the various graves.

As common burial grounds were established in Newfoundland, the living could use these spatial distances to express their continued contact with the dead. The location of the individual grave within the cemetery could be guided by local beliefs, and social groups within one cemetery could be kept separate through the creation of physical barriers around particular sections. Traditions also guided the orientation of the grave in relation to the cardinal points of the compass, and the choice of proper orientation by the living insured the happiness of the dead. This chapter will examine the use of space among graves in various Newfoundland communities as a means through which the living can express their desire to maintain contact with the dead.

When a body is buried in the ground the local culture dictates the position in which it should be placed.

It could be buried upright, or in a sitting posture, but in the Western world, including Newfoundland, the dead have usually been buried in a horizontal position, resembling those asleep. The placement of the body in this position may be related to the desire of the living to please the dead, and thus keep them at rest. If the dead are thought of as resting in their graves, then there is no danger that they will return to trouble the living.

The burial of a body in a horizontal position necessitates the digging of a rectangular grave, and this permits the living to dig a grave on a particular axis with regard to the cardinal points of the compass. The choice of this orientation enables the living to express their need to continue contact with the dead. Since grave orientation relating to the points of the compass is also connected to the future happiness of the dead, the living can hope to prevent the return of the dead by choosing the proper orientation.

In the British Isles and in Newfoundland, graves have traditionally been oriented on an east-west axis, closely connected to the general belief in the resurrection of the body on Judgement Day. The dead are usually buried facing the east, and Johnson cites several early church leaders who commented on the reasons for this practice. Durandas claimed that the "Eastward position is properly assumed in prayer." Bede stated that the "Sun of Righteousness" will come on the last day, and therefore the dead should face

the sunrise. Reference was also made to Zechariah's prophecy, which refers to Christ's coming on the last day, standing "upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the East."¹ Thus, the church tradition holds that the dead should be buried facing the east because Christ will come from the east on the last day to call them. This tradition, however, is much older than Christianity,² and this orientation has been reported as the proper form of burial in most of North America and the British Isles.³

¹Walter Johnson, Byways in British Archaeology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), pp. 243-244.

²Ibid., pp. 246-267.

³For examples of east-west burials see: Rev. J. Edward Vaux, Church Folklore: A Record of Some Post-Reformation Usages in the English Church, Now Mostly obsolete (London: Griffith Farran & Co., 1894), p. 154; Bertram S. Puckle, Funeral Customs: Their Origin and Development (London: T. Werner Laurie Ltd., 1926), pp. 148-149; Kenneth Lindley, Of Graves and Epitaphs (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1965), pp. 86-87; England Howlett, "Burial Customs," in William Andrews, ed., Curious Church Customs (London: William Andrews & Co., 1898), pp. 136-137; Mrs. Elizabeth Stone, God's Acre: or, Historical Notices Relating to Churchyards (London: John W. Parker, 1858), pp. 391-392; John Aubrey, Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme, ed. James Britten, Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, No. 4 (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint Company, 1967), p. 166; E.E. Jarrett, Lessons on the Churchyard and the Fabric of the Church (London: J. Masters & Co., 1880), pp. 8-9; Newman Ivey White, ed., The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Vol. VII: Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from North Carolina, ed. Wayland D. Hand (Durham: Duke University Press, 1964), p. 91, # 5482; see this entry for references to this practice in North America; add: Emelyn Elizabeth Gardner, Folklore from the Schoharie Hills, New York (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1937), p. 40; Elsie Clews Parsons, Folk-Lore of the Sea Islands, South Carolina (Cambridge, Mass. and New York: American Folk-Lore Society,

The great majority of burials that have taken place in the communities surveyed in this study have faced the east, indicated by the headstone marking the grave pointing to this quadrant. The reasons for utilizing this orientation in burial are not always those given by the accepted traditions of the church. In Western Bay, for example, a man reported that the corpse must face the east when buried because this was "where Our Lord was born."⁴ In Hermitage Bay, a man stated that burial had to take place with feet pointing to the entrance to the cemetery. In this way, "when the dead rise again they will be facing the entrance."⁵ In Twillingate, a resident explained that the graves face east because "Christ rose facing east (His tomb being toward the east). Also when you are alive you walk feet first as

1923), p. 215; George D. Hendricks, comp., Mirrors, Mice and Mustaches: A Sampling of Superstition and Popular Beliefs in Texas, Paisano Books No. 1 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1966), p. 25; Ray B. Browne, Popular Beliefs and Practices from Alabama, Folklore Studies No. 9 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958), pp. 187-188, # 3182; Ora L. Jones, Peculiarities of the Appalachian Mountaineers: A Summary of Legends, Traditions, Signs and Superstitions that Are Almost Forgotten (Detroit: Harlo Press, 1967), p. 78; Ronald G. Killion and Charles T. Waller, A Treasury of Georgia Folklore (Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Co., 1972), p. 208; Ann Hitchcock, "Gods, Graves and Historical Archaeologists: A Study of Two Papago Cemeteries in Southern Arizona," Arizona Friends of Folklore, AFF Word, 1:2 (July, 1971), p. 13.

⁴ MUNFLA 67-6/22 MS.

⁵ MUNFLA 68-20/36 MS.

you do on earth so you should do in death."⁶ An English variation on many of these beliefs was reported in Herefordshire:

It is said that people used to come from far and near to be buried in Orleton churchyard, because of a belief that the resurrection would begin there, and that those buried there would rise first. There is also a tradition that in a neighbouring parish a man left money for charity, on condition that he should be buried near the churchyard gate, with his feet towards it, that he might get out first.⁷

In the British Isles, the maintenance of this proper east-west orientation was considered essential to the salvation of the dead. Only those who were facing the east would hear Christ's call to arise on Judgement Day. Burials along other axes were reserved for those who would be excluded from future heavenly reward. Thus, graves with a north-south orientation were used in England and North America for suicides, murderers and dissenters.⁸ Like the prohibition of burial in consecrated ground, this form of burial was used for those who had committed socially disruptive acts, and such a form of burial would prevent these dead from resting or achieving future happiness.

In contrast with the British Isles, the use of the north-south orientation for the burial of suicides or

⁶ MUNFLA 68-21/170 MS.

⁷ Ella Mary Leather, Folk-Lore of Herefordshire (Hereford: Jackman & Carver, 1912), p. 125.

⁸ See: Vaux, Church Folklore, p. 154; Jones, Peculiarities of Mountaineers, p. 78.

murderers has not been found in Newfoundland. In fact, there have been several reports that north-south orientation was the accepted practice in particular communities.

A comment from a resident of Old Perlican is typical:

It is the custom in Old Perlican for the person to be buried with his head toward the north. I asked several people why this was done and it seems that nobody really knows. All that is know [sic] is that it has been done for hundreds of years, and perhaps the people who did it then had some reason for it, but now it is just done out of habit or custom.⁹

The use of north-south orientation for all burials has also been reported from many parts of the island.¹⁰

The fact that north-south burial is rarely connected with the unsanctified dead in Newfoundland is probably due to a large extent to the absence of clergymen in most communities during the period of early settlement. Whatever its origins, the use of east-west burial was adopted by Christian churches, and clergymen in the British Isles made certain that this orientation was used. Those who were forbidden this form of burial were persons whom the church had deemed unworthy of eternal life. In Newfoundland,

⁹ MUNFLA 71-60/20-21 MS.

¹⁰ Other communities include: Conception Harbour, MUNFLA 66-3/36 MSC; Merasheen, MUNFLA 69-8/104 MS; Holyrood, MUNFLA 72-106/13 MS; Lawn, MUNFLA Q74B-9-7; Stephenville, MUNFLA Q74B-8-7; Mary's Harbour, Labrador, MUNFLA Q74B-1-7; Dunville, MUNFLA Q74B-20-7; Seal Cove, MUNFLA Q74B-10-7. Non-east-west orientations were also reported in: Trepassey, MUNFLA Q74B-23-7; Croque, MUNFLA Q74B-15-7.

however, local traditions would initially decide which orientation, if any, was necessary, influenced largely by local belief and customs. North-south burial could be as acceptable as east-west. Only with the arrival of an organized church did the idea become widespread that there could and should be certain dead who were refused the proper burial that would insure their rest.

The absence of churches in most Newfoundland communities until the nineteenth century may also account for the apparent lack of another belief concerning the location of the dead within the burial ground. In England, certain quadrants of the cemetery were considered more sacred than others, and by burying the dead in a specific quadrant, the living could be more certain of their happiness. The unsanctified dead, on the other hand, were relegated to a quadrant of the churchyard, the north, which remained unconsecrated, and they were thus barred from obtaining eternal happiness. Most burials took place in the south portion of the churchyard, and several explanations have been given for the specific use of these quadrants. Tyack claims:

The north was of old mystically supposed to typify the Devil, and a usage prevailed in some places of opening a door on that side of the church at the administration of Holy Baptism, for the exit of the exorcised demon This fancy probably influenced the choice of grave spaces; and the fact that the south lies for the most part in warmth and sunlight, while the north is constantly enveloped in cold shadows, unquestionably gives a more attractive

appearance to the former. Both these considerations perhaps joined to make the south side the usual position for the main entrance to a parish church; and this further affected the question of burials; since the graves which lay along the most frequented path would constantly appeal to the passers-by for their charitable prayers.¹¹

A contributor to Notes and Queries, however, explained that the preference for the south side of the churchyard stemmed from the tradition that "when Jesus Christ died he turned his head towards the south."¹² Another contributor claimed that the preference for the south side was due to the fact that the churchyard crosses were usually placed on this side.¹³

Howlett reported that in England it was commonly held that on Judgement Day the dead in the eastern portion of the churchyard will rise first, then the south, west, and finally north. He claims that because of this belief, the eastern part of the cemetery is considered sacred in many communities, and there are few burials on the northern side. He mentions a gravestone, dated 1807, located on the north side of the Epworth Churchyard in Lincolnshire which expresses this belief. The last two lines of the epitaph

¹¹ Rev. George S. Tyack, Lore and Legend of the English Church (London: William Andrews & Co., 1899), pp. 66-67.

¹² "South Side of Churchyards," Notes and Queries, ser. 1, No. 38 (July 28, 1850), p. 126.

¹³ "South Side of Churchyards," Notes and Queries, ser. 1, No. 42 (August 17, 1850), p. 189; also see: "Churchyards," Notes and Queries, ser. 1, No. 46 (September 14, 1850), p. 254.

state: "And that I might longer undisturbed abide/ I choosed to be laid on this Northern side."¹⁴

The absence of these beliefs in Newfoundland concerning burials in particular quadrants relates at least partially to the absence of burial grounds supervised by the churches until relatively recent times. Beliefs concerning these quadrants relate primarily to the need for burial in consecrated ground, and the possible exclusion from final resurrection. Many members of Newfoundland communities were concerned with continuing contact with the dead by pleasing them now, rather than in their future state of existence after the resurrection.

Although the need for burial in specific quadrants of the churchyard has not been reported in Newfoundland, the living still used spatial patterns within the place of burial to express their continued contact with the dead. These patterns, created through the use both of space and artifacts, indicate social and economic status that existed in life. By wishing that the dead should maintain this status, the living were able to place them in a similar social

¹⁴Howlett, "Burial Customs," p. 137; for discussions of the quadrants of the churchyard see: Puckle, Funeral Customs, pp. 149-150; Johnson, Byways, pp. 341-353; Lindley, Of Graves, pp. 86-87; Vaux, Church Folklore, pp. 152-153; T.F. Thiselton-Dyer, Church-Lore Gleanings (London: A.D. Innes and Co.), pp. 157-159; Alexander Ross, "The Burying of Suicides in the Highlands," Inverness Scientific Society and Field Club, Transactions, 3 (1887), pp. 289-290; T.F. Thiselton-Dyer, Old English Social Life as Told by the Parish Registers (London: Elliot Stock, 1898), p. 148.

structure to that of the living, with the impression that the transition from life to death was not as abrupt as perceived. The most basic use of the spatial pattern as a means of expressing a concern for the dead is the burial in family plots.

The burial of a nuclear family usually took place within one specific section of ground.¹⁵ Even though the dead were among members of their own community in death, the burial in a family plot placed them near to those whom they were closest in life. The placement of the dead in one common cemetery acknowledged their new status as members of the community of the dead, but burial as a family in one area also emphasized the social relationships that existed in life. Spouses were always buried in a family plot, together with any unmarried children. The burial of a husband and wife in one or adjacent graves reinforced the belief that the two were now reunited. When a widow died and was buried with her husband, her children felt that she was in the company of her husband. Since they were happy together when alive, their burial together emphasized their assumed happiness when finally joined in death.¹⁶

¹⁵ This is the practice in many cultures; for example see: Parsons, Folk-Lore of the Sea Islands, p. 215.

¹⁶ A similar belief is held by the Rotumans in Polynesia; see: Alan Howard and Robert A. Scott, "Cultural Values and Attitudes Toward Death," Journal of Existentialism, 6 (1965-66), p. 169.

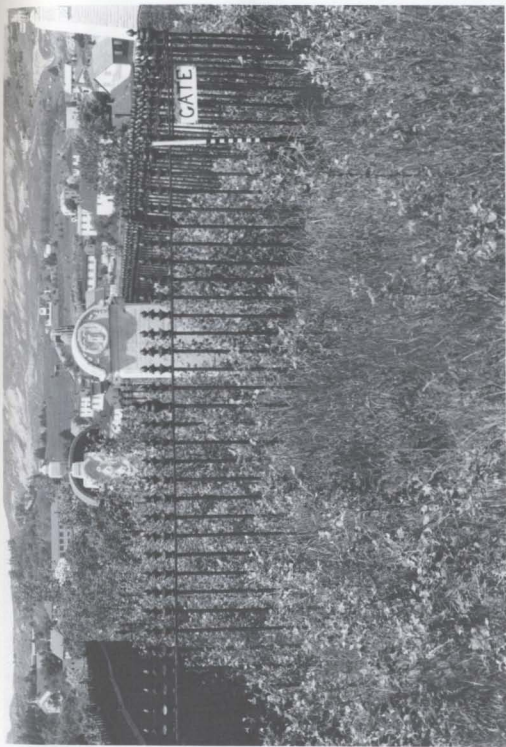
The spatial arrangement within a plot usually emphasized the leading role of the parents in the familial unit. In Ferryland, it was reported that in recent years the father and mother would be buried at the head of the plot and children at the bottom.¹⁷ The male head of the family would always be buried in the center of a plot, and if children died before him, they were placed in graves toward the sides.

The strength of the family unit even in death was indicated in many cases by the delineation of the boundaries of the family plot through the use of some type of fence or wall. Small cement walls could be constructed and placed along the border, or in more elaborate cases, a metal fence was purchased to enclose the plot, as in the United Church cemetery in Brigus (photograph 15).¹⁸ The use of these boundaries points to the need to separate various families within the community of the dead. At the same time, it warned visitors not to enter within a particular plot without good reason, thereby preserving the sleep of the dead.

Just as each community contained specific neighborhoods and economic classes, so, too, were these maintained

¹⁷ MUNFLA 70-27/20 MS.

¹⁸ Nineteenth century religious reformers campaigned against the use of these iron railings to surround plots; for an example see: Eccles J. Carter, Remarks on Christian Gravestones, Illustrated with Working Drawings (London: J. Master, 1847), p. 15.



Photograph 15. Iron railing surrounding family plot, Brigus.

by the living within the cemetery.¹⁹ Financially successful residents would often be buried in one section of the cemetery, while poorer residents would be buried in another. The United Church cemetery at Brigus again provides an example of this type of economic stratification and division within the place of burial. This cemetery is divided by a small dirt road, and on either side of this road are family plots that are owned by the more prosperous members of Brigus. The graves are marked with large granite monuments, and the plots are delineated with professionally-made borders. Behind this portion of the cemetery, a hill slopes downward towards the community, and on this hill the poorer residents of Brigus are buried. In this section, gravestones are rare, and when they are used, they are the cheap white marble type. This section is not readily visible from the dirt road, and large portions of it are overgrown with weeds.

Social status could also be maintained within the cemetery through the use of a special orientation of the grave, and this practice was used in England to indicate the role of the clergyman within the community. In England, the clergyman was usually buried facing west, so that he ;

¹⁹ For discussions dealing with social classes in the cemetery see: William M. Kephart, "Status after Death," American Sociological Review, 15 (1950), pp. 635-642; Frank W. Young, "Graveyards and Social Structure," Rural Sociology, 25 (1960), pp. 446-450.

could be facing his congregation when they rise on Judgement Day to lead them.²⁰ This practice has not been reported in Newfoundland, but instead, special plots are used for clergy, primarily by the Roman Catholic church, to indicate their special role in life. While most Roman Catholic cemeteries in Newfoundland are located in an area totally removed from the church edifice, several plots for clergy were created directly outside the church. Such plots as those outside the churches at Witless Bay and Conception Harbour are bordered by fences, and usually contain only priests. A separate burial ground for nuns was used in certain instances, such as the small cemetery behind the Roman Catholic school in Harbour Main. Just as Roman Catholic doctrine had stressed the role of the clergy, especially the priest, as mediators between God and man, so, too, were these clergy buried in a place that was closer spatially to the presence of God within the community--the church.

A Methodist clergyman, on the other hand, was buried in the United Church cemetery in Brigus. His grave contains no special markings or orientation, nor is it separated from the rest of the burial ground. Methodism stressed the need for personal religion, with the clergy at least theoretically playing only a minor role. The place of burial of this clergyman in Brigus reflects these

²⁰ See: Ruth L. Tongue, *Somerset Folklore*, ed. K.M. Briggs (London: Folk-Lore Society, 1965), p. 146.

theological tenets of Methodism, as he was afforded no special status in death. Through the spatial arrangement of this grave, the living were able to express proxemically what their religion taught socially.

With the grouping of graves together in a specific place of burial, spatial relationships are created among the graves which could be used by the living to express their continued contact with the dead. All graves could be located along a certain axis in relation to the cardinal points of the compass, determined by local or church traditions. Social units such as the family could be maintained in death through the use of family plots, lessening somewhat the social disruptiveness of death. Economic and social distances could also be carried over into death, with the creation of neighborhoods within the place of burial, and the use of space to separate various families and factions.

With the establishment of organized churches in the early nineteenth century, the use of space among graves was at least partially controlled by the church. Burials now had to always take place on an east-west axis, except where an older cemetery was still in use. The availability of plots and individual graves was also controlled by the local church, and the possible choices for the location of a grave in relation to other graves was reduced. Fences and railings could still be used to visually indicate social space,

but their use would be determined by the availability of space now under the jurisdiction of the church. The viability of this channel of expression of the living with the dead was reduced at least partially with the guidelines established by local clergyman. Only one channel was not altered by changing religious and social conditions, and this channel focused on the individual grave and the decoration of its surface. This provides one of the few remaining viable means for the expression of the need for contact of the living with the dead, and these expressions will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER. VII

THE GRAVE SURFACE

When burial takes place in most regions in the West, the body is first placed in a box, and then laid horizontally at the bottom of a rectangular grave, and then covered with earth. After the grave is filled, an outline of the horizontal dimensions of the grave is often visible, and these correspond to the approximate size of the buried body. A specific portion of ground thus has a direct association with the body buried beneath it.

The burial of the dead removes them only partially from the community. While the body is covered with earth and no longer visible, a portion of ground that possesses the approximate dimensions of this body still indicates a partial physical presence of the former community member. This grave surface takes on many of the powers and characteristics of the dead body itself, and actions directed toward it are believed to indirectly involve the body. In Newfoundland, the use of the grave surface by the living as an expression of their contact with the dead is one of the few channels which have not been institutionalized by external controls. Through the use of this ground, the living are able to maintain contact which, in the past, took place through many channels. This chapter will describe the forms

that this contact takes place in Newfoundland, both through customs and artifacts.

Unlike all the channels previously discussed, the grave surface provides the living with a contact with a specific community member now dead. Through practices connected with this surface, the living are concerned with only one person. Instead of expressing contact with the dead generally, the living can express contact with an individual who would frequently have been a member of the extended or nuclear family. This individual contact could provide one of the most viable means of lessening the social disruptiveness of death, since artifactual and customary contact with the grave would replace the social contact which formerly took place with the living.

Not only did the use of the grave surface lessen the social disruptiveness of death; the grave surface provided a spatial focus for the living where they could express their continued respect and love for the individual dead, adding not only to his/her own happiness, but also insuring that this individual would not return to trouble the living. The living were concerned that the dead would continue their assumed rest.

The most widespread belief concerning the individual grave, both in North America and the British Isles, concerns the treading on the grave surface by the living.¹ The

¹For the taboo concerning stepping on a grave in other regions see: Rev. George S. Tyack, Lore and Legend of the

dimensions of the grave delineated the approximate size of the body, and to step on the grave surface was to tread directly over the body. In spite of the fact that the body most likely had disintegrated in many instances, the taboo of stepping on the grave still applied to the entire surface. Just as the treading on a sleeping person who was alive would be unthinkable, so, too, was such an action toward the dead prohibited.² The dead, in fact, were frequently considered to be in a special kind of sleep: "A resident of Bishop's Falls, for example, explained that:

As children we were also warned by our grandparents and even our parents, never to tread upon a grave whenever we visited the cemetery. Thus, whenever we visited the graveyard on our berry-picking trips we would make sure and take all precautions never to do so. To tread upon a grave was believed to be a definite mark of disrespect and also an indication that some ill was to befall you during the course of the following year. Most generally, this calamity,

English Church (London: William Andrews & Co., 1899), p. 83; Robert Hunt, Popular Romances of the West of England (3rd ed., London: Chatto & Windus, 1903), p. 432; C.J.S. Thompson, The Hand of Destiny: The Folk-Lore and Superstitions of Everyday Life (London: Rider & Co., 1932), p. 26; Newman Ivey White, ed., The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, Vol. VII: Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from North Carolina, ed. Wayland D. Hand (Durham: Duke University Press, 1964), p. 93; # 5490-5495; see Hand's notes for references to this taboo in North America; add Ora L. Jones, Peculiarities of the Appalachian Mountaineers: A Summary of Legends, Traditions, Signs and Superstitions that Are Almost Forgotten (Detroit: Harlo Press, 1967), p. 80.

²One resident of Alabama reported, for example: "I have heard this one explained as 'just showing decency toward the dead; you wouldn't want somebody stepping on you, would you?'" See: Ray B. Browne, Popular Beliefs and Practices from Alabama, Folklore Studies No. 9 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958), p. 184, # 3132.

or misfortune would also take the form of death within the immediate family.³

By disturbing the dead, harm could result to members of the living. Expressions of contact with the dead were necessary in order to prevent their return, but only certain forms of expression were acceptable. If unsanctioned actions occurred which did not recognize the unique state of existence of the dead, then misfortune could ensue. Not only was the dead body present beneath the grave, but the potentially harmful spirit would also be found near its former body.⁴

Harm could result if the individual place of burial was disturbed in any manner which would potentially harm the dead. Treading on a grave would be one type of this kind of behavior. A former resident of St. Albans described a more drastic form, and its consequences:

... a neighbor of mine tells the story of a young man in the late thirties who, just for bravery, danced on a grave while returning with his buddy from a bird hunting expedition. He was undoubtedly peeved because he had had no luck. In less than three days his left arm and shoulder were totally paralyzed and remained so until his accidental drowning several years later. People here believe to this day that his infliction [sic] was a punishment for dancing on a grave.⁵

³MUNFLA 71-31/93 MS.

⁴For a discussion of the belief that the spirit dwells near the grave see: Margaret Mead, "The Immortality of Man," in Simon Doniger, ed., The Nature of Man in Theological and Psychological Perspective (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 203.

⁵MUNFLA 71-63/13-14 MS.

The community tradition clearly spelled out the possible consequences of this man's actions, and his misfortune was immediately explainable when it occurred.

Specific behavioral guidelines were established to insure that expressions of contact of the living with the dead at the grave would provide for the happiness of the dead, and prevent their disturbance and subsequent return. Through the decoration of the surface of the grave itself, visual expressions of constant contact were possible.

When a grave surface is decorated, a community member expresses his acceptance of the presence of a body in the ground. The dimensions of the surface of the grave correspond roughly with the dimensions of the coffin. The markings of the borders, or the entire surface of the grave acknowledges the presence of this coffin and its contents. Thus, in a certain sense, when grave care and decoration take place, these actions symbolically are performed to the body: If treading on a grave can disturb the dead, then its decoration can be considered as the decorating of the body itself. Although it is buried and perhaps disintegrated, a very intricate connection still exists between the grave surface and the body.

The decoration and care of the grave surface and the placement of objects on it has taken place in many Western cultures, and is still reported today, not only in Newfoundland, but in other parts of North America and Europe. This

practice was apparently once common throughout the British Isles. One researcher in County Mayo in Ireland reported that: "It is customary to decorate the graves with large white pebbles, and to place at the head a neatly made wooden cross."⁶ Flowers were planted on the surface of graves in Wales,⁷ and this custom was also found in some parts of England.⁸ Household objects were placed on graves in

⁶Charles R. Browne, "Ethnography of the Mullett, Inishkea Islands and Portacloy, County Mayo," Royal Academy of Ireland, Proceedings, ser. 3, 3 (1895), p. 623.

⁷William Tegg, The Last Act: Being the Funeral Rites of Nations and Individuals (London: William Tegg & Co., 1876), p. 321; Rev. Francis Kilvert, Kilvert's Diary: Selections from the Diary of the Rev. Francis Kilvert, 1 January, 1870-19 August, 1871, ed. William Plomer (London: Jonathan Cape, 1961), pp. 93-94; Jonathan Ceredig Davies, "Funeral Practices in Wales," Bye-Gones, 9 (1905), pp. 64-65; F. Greene, "Funeral Practices in Wales," Bye-Gones, 9 (1905), p. 38; D.M.R., "Funeral Practices in Wales," Bye-Gones, 9 (1905), pp. 55-56.

⁸Enid Porter, Cambridgeshire Customs and Folklore (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 30; John Brand, Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain: Chiefly illustrating the Origin of Our Vulgar and Provincial Customs, Ceremonies, and Superstitions, rev. Henry Ellis (London: George Bell and Sons, 1888), II, 307-313; Margaret Baker, Folklore and Customs of Rural England (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1974), pp. 167-168; John Aubrey, Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme, ed. James Britten, Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, No. 4 (Nendeln: Kraus Reprint Limited, 1967), p. 155; Frederick Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," Monumental Journal, 13 (1946), pp. 177-179; 16 (1949), pp. 365-366; Mrs. Elizabeth Stone, God's Acre: or, Historical Notices Relating to Churchyards (London: John W. Parker, 1858), pp. 254-262, 275; Rev. J. Edward Vaux, Church Folklore: A Record of Some Post-Reformation Usages in the English Church, Now Mostly Obsolete (London: Griffith Farran & Co., 1894), p. 169; S.O. Addy, "Sage on Graves," Notes and Queries, ser. 7, 4 (1887), p. 236; H.C. Barnard, "Grave to Be Turfed and Bryered," Notes and Queries, ser. 12, 9 (1921), p. 389.

specific regions in North America⁹ and Europe.¹⁰

The most basic method of decorating the surface of the grave consisted in carefully delineating the grave border with some type of physical objects. This practice was used in prehistoric burials in many areas,¹¹ and a border of small stones was often used. Sea shells were also placed around the border of a grave, and the use of shells for this purpose seems to be an ancient custom.¹² The use of shells for grave borders has been reported during the last century

⁹Objects such as dishes and pottery, lightbulbs and those that the deceased was fond of in life have been placed on graves. For examples among southern blacks see: Newbell Niles Puckett, Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; London: Humphrey Milford, 1926), pp. 104-107; H. Carrington Bolton, "Decoration of Graves of Negroes in South Carolina," Journal of American Folklore, 4 (1891), p. 214; Ronald G. Killion and Charles T. Waller, A Treasury of Georgia Folklore (Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Co., 1972), p. 210; for a Mexican example see: Barbara Jones, Design for Death (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1967), p. 133.

¹⁰For an Irish example of placing broken plates on a grave see: E. Estyn Evans, Irish Folk Ways (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), p. 73.

¹¹For examples from Poland see: Marija Gimbutas, The Prehistory of Eastern Europe (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1956), p. 130.

¹²See: Walter Johnson, Byways in British Archaeology (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1912), p. 302; Wilfred J. Jackson, Shells as Evidence of the Migration of Early Culture (Manchester: University Press; London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1917), pp. 123-194.

in Sweden, northern Germany, Dalmatia,¹³ and England,¹⁴ as well as in Louisiana,¹⁵ Texas¹⁶ and Newfoundland. In Merasheen, for example, a former resident reported that the grave was "decorated with shells and pretty stones, found on the seashore, by children. These ornaments were usually laid out in patterns of the coffin, and followed its location as closely as possible."¹⁷ In Tilting, the shells would be placed in the sign of a cross.¹⁸ Wood or metal could also be used to demarcate the borders of the grave, as well as shells or stones. A former resident of Muddy Hole described several variations:

¹³ Sara Clark, "The Decoration of Graves in Central Texas with Seashells," in Wilson M. Hudson, ed., Diamond Bessie and the Shepherds, Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, No. 36 (Austin: Encino Press, 1972), p. 40 and footnote 4.

¹⁴ Frederick Burgess, "Shells and their Significance as Grave Decoration," Monumental Journal, 18 (1951), pp. 109-110.

¹⁵ Fred Kniffen, "Necrogeography in the United States," Geographical Review, 57 (1967), p. 427; Writer's Program, Louisiana, Gumbo Ya-Ya, comp. Lyle Saxon, Edward Drayer and Robert Talland (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1945), p. 317.

¹⁶ Clark, "Decoration of Graves," pp. 33-43; Dorothy Jean Michael, "Grave Decoration," in Mody C. Boatright and Donald Day, eds., Backwoods to Border, Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, No. 18 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1943), p. 133; for comments about the use of shells as grave decorations in an unnamed cemetery in the eastern United States see: "Good Taste in our Cemeteries," Garden and Forest, 5 (June 1, 1892), p. 253.

¹⁷ MUNFLA 69-8/103 MS.

¹⁸ MUNFLA 72/107/33 MS.

The grave area was surrounded by a 'faunt' (rectangular board attached on edges and about 6" high). Sometimes a few rocks were placed on the outside of this rectangular shaped box . . . concerning the graves without wooden faunts, 'sods' and rocks were used to form the 'grave'. 'Sods' were sometimes called 'clots' as well. The sods were placed around the grave, forming a rectangle with round corners. The edges of the sods or sides of the sods were filled with mud. The round rocks were then placed around the grave on top of the sods and painted white.¹⁹

He provided the following additional information and a drawing:

There was one particular 'faunt' in the old cemetery that stood out among them all. This faunt was in a rectangular shape made of wood with its sides 6" high. The rectangular frame was then covered with glass. Two or three glasses which made up the length of the faunt. Flowers were grown inside.²⁰

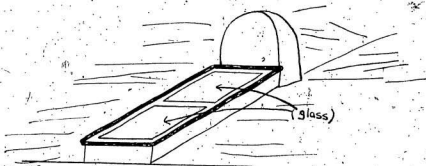


Figure 2: Decorated grave at Muddy Hole.

¹⁹ MUNFLA Q74B-25-3; Q74B-26-3.

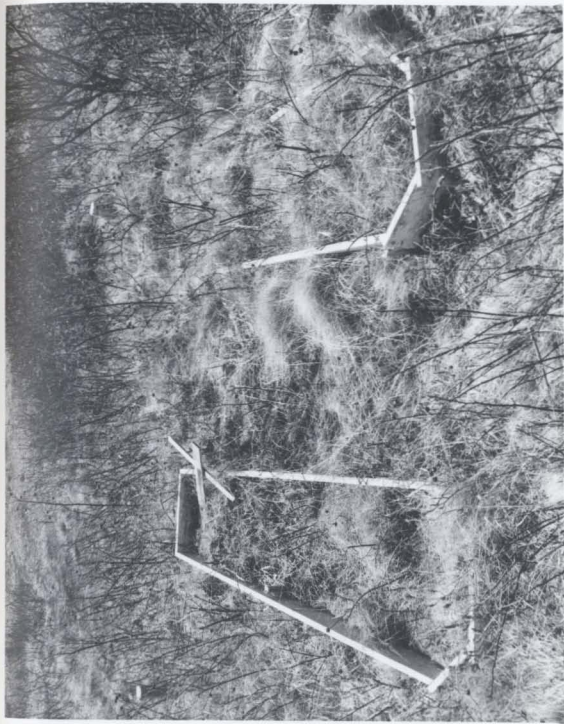
²⁰ MUNFLA Q74B-26-9.

Borders would either follow the rectangular outline of the grave that had been dug, or in some cases take the shape of the actual coffin. The graves of two twins in the Roman Catholic cemetery in Petty Harbour (photograph 16) are outlined with simple wooden planks in the shape of coffins. The use of such a coffin-shaped grave border visually indicated to the living that this grave surface should be treated with the same attitudes as the coffin beneath it. Even though the cemetery is unkept, the presence of the graves of these two dead children is clearly visible to anyone who would walk through the area.

Quite frequently, the grave surface is kept free from weeds by removing the sod from this area. The earth is then kept free from uncontrolled growth,²¹ and some type of markers are often placed at the outer dimensions of the grave. The grave surface can also be covered with a substance such as sand. Several residents of Cupids covered the graves of their family with gravel that was obtained by the roadside. A resident of Dunville reported that "Some graves are covered with the white-waste phosphorus from Long Harbour. This looks very well indeed."²² A resident of Clarke's

²¹ Platt reported that in England, "It has always been considered a bad sign if a grave turfs itself--that is, if the grass is allowed to grow upon an untended grave. Obviously it shows a lack of affection." See: Charles Platt, Popular Superstitions (London: Herbert Jenkins Ltd., 1925), p. 195.

²² MUNFLA Q74B-20-3. This white waste phosphorus was obtained at the nearby plant at Long Harbour, Placentia Bay.



Photograph 16. Wooden grave borders, Petty Harbour.

Beach reported that broken glass was placed on the grave surface.²³

A grave in Bishop's Cove (photograph 17) provides an example of the care of the grave surface. Two rough stones have been placed at the head and foot of the grave, with the name or initials of the dead painted on the stones. The surface of this grave has been cleared of all grass and weeds, and daffodils have been planted at the two ends. Three plastic flowers have been inserted down the center of the grave.

In another series of graves in the same burial ground (photograph 18), rough stones have again been placed at the heads and feet of the graves. The stones placed at the heads, however, have been painted white, and the initials of the dead have been added in black. Again, the grave surface is free from any weeds, and several flowers have been planted on the surface.

In many cases, the border of a grave is clearly marked and the surface itself is also decorated. On a grave in the cemetery at Chapel's Cove (photograph 19), the grave border has been carefully outlined with rounded stones of a uniform

²³ MUNFLA Q74B-3-3; this practice has also been reported in other parts of North America; see: Kniffen, "Necrogeography," p. 427; Puckett, *Folk Beliefs*, pp. 105-107; Killion and Waller, *Treasury*, p. 210; Guy Kirtley, "'Hoping Out' in East Texas," in J. Frank Dobie, Mody C. Boatright and Harry H. Ranson, eds., *Texas Stomping Grounds*, Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, No. 17 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1941), p. 32.



Photograph 17. Decorated grave marked with two field stones, plastic flowers and live plants, Bishop's Cove.



Photograph 18. Three decorated graves marked with field stones, Bishop's Cove.



size, most likely gathered at a nearby beach. The grave surface has been cleared from weeds, and plastic flowers have been placed down the center of the entire grave. The headstone was commercially produced in St. John's. The decoration of the surface of this grave provides an expression of individual contact with the dead which the professionally manufactured headstone does not.

During the summer months, wild flowers are sometimes picked and placed on the grave surface, along with artificial flowers. These freshly picked flowers are placed in all types of containers, such as cans or jars. On a grave in Bishop's Cove (photograph 20), a wide variety of wildflowers has been placed on the grave surface, together with plastic roses and tulips. There is also a wooden box with a glass window on this grave containing dried flowers, and it most likely was placed there during the winter or spring.

Simple lengths of wood may provide the border for a grave, though more elaborate variations are often found. On a grave in the new Roman Catholic cemetery in Bay Bulls (photograph 21), the border was first constructed of wood. After this was completed, the wood was covered with plastic counter-top material, formica. This formica was white, with a gold swirl pattern. This type of border would not need painting, and the formica would protect the wood from the elements. The surface of this grave was covered with various types of plastic flowers.



Photograph 20. Various types of flower containers on a decorated grave, Bishop's Cove.



Photograph 21. Decorated grave containing a wooden border covered with formica, Bay Bulls.

Combinations of these various methods of grave decoration are possible, and are often found within one large family plot. In such a plot in the new Roman Catholic cemetery in Bay Bulls (photograph 22), the two graves in the foreground contain borders made of concrete. The other graves in the plot are bordered by rounded stones that have been painted white. Various kinds of artificial and real flowers are placed on the grave surfaces, and the entire plot is enclosed by a metal railing mounted in a concrete wall.

Grave visiting takes place in many Newfoundland communities throughout the summer, and families will often clean the grave, repair its borders, and place flowers on its surface during these visits. Through these expressions, the living can continue to form a psychological contact with the dead. The grave is the actual home of the deceased community member, and it is here that visits to that member can be made. A resident of Carbonear reported an example of grave visiting which, although somewhat humorous, indicates at least the partial social contact that occurs at the place of burial:

I've been told stories of one old lady in Carbonear who still visits her husband's grave very frequently. He has been dead about fourteen or fifteen years. I've heard that she even brings meals to him and when she returns for the plate, she usually finds it empty. She thinks her husband eats the food although actually some boys watch her putting the food there and eat it when she leaves. (I don't know if this is really true).



Photograph 22. Decorated graves with various types of borders, Bay Bulls.

It is said that not a day passes when she doesn't go and sit on his grave and talk to him for hours. She sometimes visits him late at night.²⁴

The visiting and decorating of the grave has been organized in many Newfoundland communities by the local churches, so that specific days are set aside when graves are decorated in preparation for religious services in the cemetery. Unlike so many other channels of expression of contact of the living with the dead, the churches have not imposed their own laws or traditions on this form of contact. They have merely given their official sanction to a practice which is not an integral part of their own teachings. Even All Saints Day and All Souls Day within the Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions have not absorbed these practices.²⁵

²⁴ MUNFLA 69-22/183 MS. The custom of leaving food on the grave for the dead is quite widespread; for examples see: Bertram Puckle, Funeral Customs: Their Origin and Development (London: T. Werner Laurie Ltd., 1926), pp. 99-100, 235; E. Bendann, Death Customs: An Analytical Study of Burial Rites (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930), p. 153 ff.; Leopold von Schrenck, Die Völker des Amur-Landes; Reisen und Forschungen im Amur-Lande in den Jahren 1854-1856 (St. Petersburg: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1881), p. 770; Franz Obermaier, Ukraine, Lande der schwarzen Erde (Wien: Wiener Verlagsgesellschaft, 1942), p. 147; Harold U. Sverdrup, Hos tundrafolk (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1938), pp. 136-137; Alfred Métraux, Ethnology of Easter Island, Bulletin 160 (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1940), p. 118.

²⁵ Similar practices have been incorporated by the churches into common memorial days in Europe; see: Reidar Th. Christiansen, The Dead and the Living, Studia Norvegica No. 2 (Oslo: Johansen & Nielsen, 1946), p. 46; for examples of these annual occasions when the cemetery is decorated and visited in other parts of North America see: Hortense Warner Ward, "Yellow Flower of Death," in Mody C. Boatright, ed., The Sky Is My Tipi, Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, No. 22 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1949), pp. 155-167; Kirtley, "'Hoping Out,'" p. 32.

All denominations, including the United Church and Salvation Army, hold these annual services connected with the cemetery, in spite of a de-emphasis on prayers for the dead. Church leaders never stipulate how the grave should be cleaned or decorated, and this is completely determined by local traditions. Preparations for the Anglican service in Foxtrap are typical of many reports:

About a week before "flower service" people who had relatives buried in the graveyard "tended to the plots" or the graves of their dead relatives. This would involve cleaning the graves of debris that might have gathered there during the year, cleaning the plot of weeds and unwanted growth and often putting a fresh top layer of clay on the grave. If there were white fences around the family plot, they were usually painted. On the Sunday of the "flower service" the families brought fresh flowers or artificial ones to decorate the graves and they usually gathered around as the minister conducted a service. After the service people strolled around the graveyard observing the newly decorated graves.²⁶

The United Church tradition reported in Clarke's Beach is similar:

There is usually a flower service held in the United Church and Salvation Army cemeteries each summer around August. In the U.C., the minister usually announces for the people to clean their graves for this service (about 1 week before). Weeds & rocks are removed, flowers are placed on the graves and sometimes the letters on the headstones are painted with black enamel [sic] or paint.²⁷

The Roman Catholic churches usually conduct an outdoor mass in the cemetery, and an outdoor altar was

²⁶ MUNFLA 73-99/63 MS.

²⁷ MUNFLA Q74B-3-3.

permanently constructed in the Avondale cemetery for this purpose. A resident of St. Thomas described the preparations which are typical of most Roman Catholic churches:

... the church adherents of St. Thomas use certain Sundays in summer to clean up graves. One mass is scheduled in the graveyard each summer and relatives of those interred, go to graves to dress them up by making the mounds even and then putting artificial flowers upon them a day or so before the date of the Mass. The date of the open-air Mass is not a fixed date but one prescribed by the parish priest. Fences are constructed when the need arises. Materials are brought out of the parish's coffers and the men of St. Thomas provide free labour, always done on Sunday afternoons. New wire fence was constructed during the summer of 1973.²⁸

These community rituals supervised annually by the local churches, provide residents with a sanction for their grave decorating and visiting customs that occur through so much of the year. The church itself holds a religious ceremony within the cemetery which requires the cleaning and decorating of graves. Individual visits and decoration must therefore be acceptable and beneficial to both the living and the dead. Community and individual expressions of contact focused on the grave surface permit the living to acknowledge the presence of the dead, and indicate their continued concern for them.

In summary, the surface of the grave provides the living with a space which is directly associated with the presence of the individual dead. Although the community member is now dead, the living can still retain at least

partially the former social role of the dead by now focusing on his or her specific place of burial. Visits to the grave on special occasions can replace the social interchange which would have occurred if these community members were still alive. The placing of objects, such as flowers, on the grave replaces the verbal and gestural interchange which would have taken place in life, and enables the living to visually indicate their expression of contact with the dead. Such decorations serve to indicate to other community members that individual residents have continued their contact with those who were close to them in life, since objects remain on the grave after the initial expression of contact has been made. Unlike other channels of contact, the use of the grave surface by the living has not been institutionalized by external codes, and local traditions fully determine the form that these expressions take.

The contact of the living in this channel takes place at the individual grave, permitting expressions to specific members of the community of the dead. The living could also attempt to show their continued contact with individual dead by constructing a marker to identify the grave, and the construction of these grave markers will be discussed next.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GRAVE MARKER

In the West, the disposal of the dead through burial usually takes place through the use of individual graves. Spouses and children are also buried in one grave, but such multiple burials in one place usually do not extend beyond members of the nuclear family.

With the placement of the dead in an individual grave, the unique identity of that person within the community of the dead is lost. The body is now covered, and its distinct features have disappeared. The desire of the living to continue to express contact with the individual dead necessitates that the location of this specific person be clearly marked, especially if contact is related closely to the final location of the body. In order to clearly mark and identify the place of burial, the living can construct some type of marker and place it on the grave. In the West, the most commonly utilized form of marker is the gravestone.

The construction and erection of a grave marker enables the living to express their continued contact with a specific deceased person. Through this design and placement, the living could indicate their desire for the grave to be clearly connected with the deceased, and provide an indication of their concern by creating one more means of

maintaining visual contact with the place of burial, and therefore with the dead.

The practice of marking the grave with some type of artifact that identifies the deceased is relatively recent in the West. This tradition began even later in Newfoundland, relating to many complex factors. This chapter will examine the historical development of the use of grave markers in the British Isles, since the Newfoundland pattern grew directly from this tradition. The types of markers used in Newfoundland will be examined, and their temporal and formal distribution will be discussed. The origins of these markers will be described, as well as the political and economic factors which influenced their use. Finally, some comment will be made about the viability of these markers as expressions of contact of the living with the dead.

Burial has frequently been used in the West as a means of disposing of the dead body, and this practice has included both the literal burial of the body in the earth, and the placement of the body above ground within some type of enclosure, such as a tomb. This latter practice, although commonly referred to as burial, was not really the same type of disposal as earth burials. Nevertheless, these two forms of disposal will be regarded as types of burial for the purpose of this discussion.

In the early history of Christianity, burial took place both in the earth and above ground in tombs.¹

Burial in tombs was accompanied by the marking of the outside of these tombs with some type of inscription concerning the deceased, usually his name and a prayer expressing his Christian beliefs in future resurrection. Burial in tombs was usually reserved for the leaders of a community, both lay and religious, and these tombs frequently became the focus of community religious services. Earth burials, on the other hand, were rarely marked.

In his English Churchyard Memorials,² Frederick Burgess devotes a large section to the historical development of grave markers in England. In this survey, he theoretically outlines all the various types of markers that have been used in England from prehistoric to Post-Reformation times. He gives the impression that some types of markers have been used during this entire time period. He presents various artifacts which apparently have been used to mark graves, but he uses these few examples to make

¹For a discussion of these early types of Christian burial places see: Arnold Whittick, History of Cemetery Sculpture (London: Mineral Publications, 1938), pp. 56-61; Bertram S. Puckle, Funeral Customs: Their Origin and Development (London: T. Werner Laurie Ltd., 1926), pp. 141-143; Charles Maitland, The Church in the Catacombs: A Description of the Primitive Church of Rome, Illustrated by Its Sepulchral Remains (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longman, 1846), chapter 3.

²Frederick Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials (London: Lutterworth Press, 1963).

generalizations about the frequency of their use. Contrary to Burgess' claims, grave markers were not common until the seventeenth century, and their use during the Middle Ages was virtually unknown.

During the middle ages, as more and more churches began to be built in the British Isles, interment of political and religious leaders began to take place increasingly within the church edifice. The dead were buried beneath the floor of the church, and when the stone flooring was replaced, the burial was marked to indicate the presence of this community leader (figure 3). By indicating the place of burial on the floor slab, the living were able to pray to these leaders for special favors and assistance.³

Although burials had occurred extensively under the church floor, decomposition eventually provided more space for the interment of civil and religious leaders. Since the floor slabs had been inscribed or covered with monumental brasses, the name of the deceased had to be placed elsewhere. The closest available area was the interior church wall, and special plaques or murals were gradually constructed to contain these inscriptions (figure 4).⁴

³For examples of these early floor slabs see: Frederick Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," Monumental Journal; 9 (1942), pp. 299-302; 10, (1943), pp. 49-52, 123-125, 227-230, 236, 263-266, 299-302; 11 (1944), pp. 85-88.

⁴For examples see: Herbert Batsford and Walter H. Godfrey, English Mural Monuments and Tombstones (London:

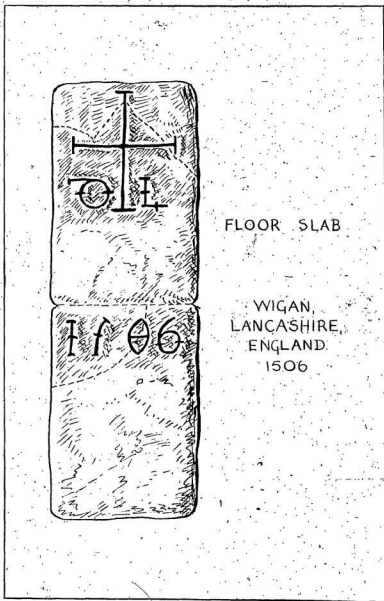


Figure 3. Floor slab marking burial under the floor of a church.

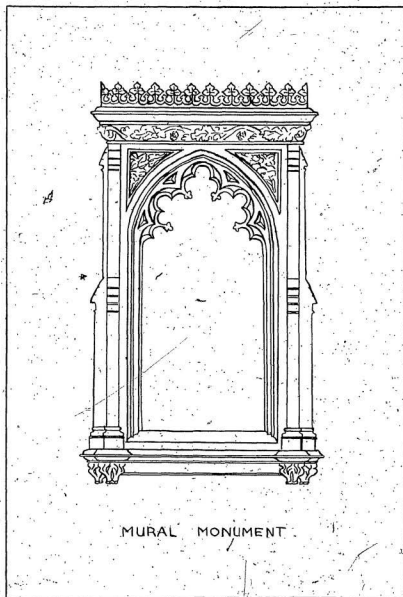


Figure 4. Mural Monument

Additional burial space was also created by the introduction of wooden and stone burial chests located above ground within the church. These tombs frequently had a recumbent effigy of the dead person on the top. (figure 5).⁵

The development of these three types of burial markers did not change drastically the need for some type of artifact to indicate the place of burial. Only the nobility and clergy continued to be interred within the church, while most people were buried in unmarked graves in the churchyard. The need for a marked grave would only arise in the seventeenth century, and was only one indication of the fundamental changes that were taking place within society.

B.T. Batsford Ltd.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), plates 3-35, 38-50; Katherine A. Esdaile, English Church Monuments, 1510 to 1840 (London: B.T. Batsford, 1946); Frederick Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," Monumental Journal, 13 (1946), pp. 91-94; Lawrence Weaver, Memorials and Monuments, Old and New: Two Hundred Subjects Chosen from Seven Centuries (London: Country Life, 1915), pp. 26-117.

⁵For examples see: Fred H. Crossley, English Church Monuments, A.D. 1150-1550: An Introduction to the Study of Tombs and Effigies of the Medieval Period (London: B.T. Batsford, 1921); Esdaile, English Church Monuments; Rev. E. Hermitage Day, Monuments and Memorials, The Arts of the Church (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co.; Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co., 1915), pp. 22-135; James Mann, "English Church Monuments, 1536-1625," Walpole Society, 21 (1932), pp. 1-22; James Williams, "English Church Monuments," Royal Institute of British Architects, Journal, ser. 3, 22 (1914-15), pp. 217-233; Margaret G. Alfred, "Early English Monumental Work," Amateur Historian, 4 (1955), pp. 198-201.

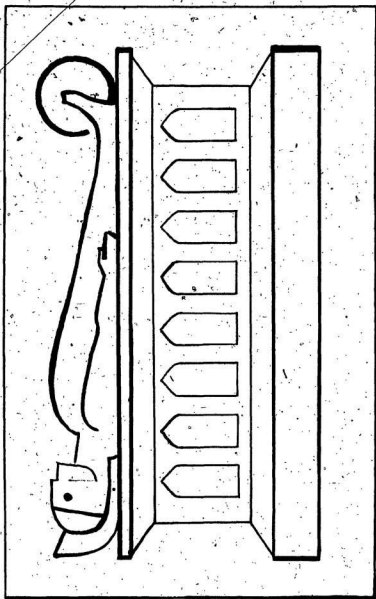


Figure 5. Interior burial tomb with effigy.

During the Middle Ages, life took a very different form from that of the Post-Reformation period, related partially to the Church's leading position in the local community. In this time period, death was known and accepted, and members of the community were not stunned by its appearance. As a recent writer explained, "death was both familiar and near, evoking no great fear or awe."⁶

The burial of the dead was supervised by the local church, and the body was placed in the sacred space of the churchyard. The church insured the destiny of the soul, and once the body was interred in the churchyard under the care of the church, this destiny was certain. The body was no longer of any consequence, and there was no need to mark its location.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, changes were occurring in many aspects of British society which would cause an alteration of attitudes toward death. Because of the economic developments during this time, a new class began to emerge in society, dependent upon free trade and the accumulation of capital. The fabric of medieval society had been torn, and the closed economic system of feudalism was disappearing.

⁶Philippe Ariès, Western Attitudes toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present, trans. Patricia M. Ranum (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 13.

The rise of this new middle-class coincided in some regions with the rise of Protestantism, and religious reform movements began to sweep Europe.⁷ Many changes in the social order reflected Protestantism's emphasis on the individual and his own acts and thoughts. In Protestant theology, especially in the more radical brands of Calvinism, the individual was totally responsible for his own salvation, and the church had only a small role to play in this quest. When death came, the individual could not rely on the comfort of the church or community to insure his future life. It would be through the marking of a grave with a specific monument, which frequently described the virtuous life of the deceased, that the living could indicate to others, and to themselves, that the dead had obtained happiness. A definite shift in attitude had taken place, as Ariès noted:

In the Middle Ages the dead were entrusted to or rather abandoned to the care of the church, and the exact location of their place of burial was of little importance; most often being indicated neither by a monument nor even by a simple inscription. Certainly by the fourteenth century, one can discern a more pronounced concern for marking the site of the tomb, a good indication of a new feeling which was increasingly

⁷ Several writers have linked the rise of capitalism to the rise of Protestantism and its theological tenets. Although much of the argument has been disproved, many points are still valid; see: Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scribner, 1958); Richard H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (London: J. Murray, 1936).

being expressed, without being able to impose itself completely.⁸

Only with the rise of the middle class would the necessity for the marking of the individual grave develop.

The relatively late development of grave markers that indicated specific burials outside the church has surprised some writers who no doubt feel that such markers are a cultural necessity. These writers have claimed that the iconoclasm of the seventeenth century Puritan reformers destroyed most of these early gravestones, and this is the reason why markers dated before 1500 are rare.⁹ Quite the contrary, for it was these Puritan reformers, usually members of the rising middle class, who felt the need to mark a grave with some type of artifact.¹⁰

⁸Aries, Western Attitudes, p. 69; also see: Joscelyne Finberg, Exploring Villages (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), pp. 174-175; for the Protestant theological attitudes toward the dead which led to the erecting of memorials to the dead see: Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 720-721.

⁹For typical comments see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 12 (1945), pp. 13-15; for a recent survey of this iconoclasm see: John Phillips, The Reformation of Images: Destruction of Art in England, 1535-1660 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974). Edward Gray claimed that gravestones began to be used in the late 1600's because of the necessity of marking the location of people who died during the many plagues; see: Edward F. Gray, "A Remarkable Collection of 17th Century Gravestones," Monumental Journal, 23 (1956), p. 490.

¹⁰For example, gravestone designs in Calvinistic Scotland were exceptionally elaborate, and became common only after the Scottish Kirk had been reformed. For general surveys of these styles see: David Christison, "The Carvings and Inscriptions on the Kirkyard Monuments of the Scottish

The use of any type-of grave marker in the church-yard or cemetery before the seventeenth century was rare, and, as Vincent points out: "Of gravestones generally it may almost be said that specimens of seventeenth century date are exceeding few."¹¹ The markers that were used in the churchyard beginning in the seventeenth century developed directly from those that were used to mark the burials of nobility and clergymen within the church, a kind of artifactual "gesunkenes kulturgut."¹²

Lowlands, Particularly in Perth, Fife, Angus, Mearns, and Lothian," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, 36 (1902), pp. 280-457; David Christison, "Additional Notes on the Kirkyard Monuments of the Scottish Lowlands," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, 39 (1904-05), pp. 55-116; for recent surveys, see: John di Folco, "Kirkyard Monuments in the Laich of Moray: An Illustrated Survey," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, 99 (1966-67), pp. 211-254; John di Folco, "Graveyard Monuments in East, North and Central Fife," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, 102 (1969-70), pp. 205-236. In his study of the Puritan gravestone carving tradition in New England, Allan Ludwig found an elaborate stylistic tradition in a culture that supposedly was iconoclastic; for his comments see: Allan I. Ludwig, Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and Its Symbols, 1650-1815 (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1966), pp. 45-52.

¹¹William T. Vincent, In Search of Gravestones Old and Curious (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1896), p. 7. Even Burgess admitted that there were only some 260 known examples of seventeenth century English gravestones in 1956; see: Frederick Burgess, "Gravestones of the 17th Century," Monumental Journal, 23 (1956), p. 557.

¹²For a discussion of this concept of gesunkenes kulturgut see: Haas Naumann, Grundzüge der deutschen Volkskunde (Leipzig: Quelle and Meyer, 1929).

Three major types of grave markers for use outside the church would develop from those styles found inside the church. These three major types--the chest tomb, the recumbent slab, and the headstone--were used throughout the British Isles since the late seventeenth century, but only two of these types would be used extensively in Newfoundland, because of political and economic factors..

When burials initially took place under the floor of the churches, the stone floor slab covering this burial was marked with an inscription. This practice was borrowed, and a recumbent slab, merely a large rectangular stone covering the entire surface of the grave, was used to mark burials outside the church.¹³

Chest tombs, which initially contained the dead body, and later were merely placed over the grave as a marker, were an adaptation of the interior chest tombs and sarcophagi, although the use of recumbent effigies on these tombs outside the church was rare.¹⁴

¹³For examples of recumbent slabs see: James Walton, "The Craft of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Monumental Mason," Monumental and Architectural Journal, 7 (1940), pp. 379-381.

¹⁴For examples of chest tombs see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 8 (1941), pp. 173-175; 12 (1945), pp. 335-338; 13 (1946), pp. 11-15, 49-53; Frederick Burgess, "Fashion in Monuments," Monumental Journal, 28 (1961), pp. 42-47; "A Famous Churchyard in the Cotswolds: Distinctive Renaissance Memorials," Monumental Journal, 19 (1952), pp. 449-452, 517-520; Ada K. Longfield, Some Irish Churchyard Sculpture (Ballycotton, Co. Cork: Gifford & Craven, 1974), p. 5.

The use of a small upright slab, the headstone, to mark the grave outside the church apparently is an adaptation of the design of the interior mural monument.¹⁵ The formal relationship between the gravestone and the mural tablet is close, and the layout of the lettering is identical. Several writers claim that the headstone developed from wooden antecedents, and again, this theory is based on the erroneous assumption that some type of grave marker has been in use for many centuries.

These three types of grave markers--a recumbent slab, chest tomb, and headstone--began to be utilized in the British Isles in the early 1600's, and by 1700, each type was used in most regions of England, Scotland and Ireland. Of these three, the headstone was used most extensively, most likely because of its cheaper cost and the ease in handling.

In previous studies both in the British Isles and North America, basic grave marker typologies have been developed which have overlooked the fundamental spatial characteristics of specific grave markers and their relationship to the grave, and unnecessarily involved classifications have been put forth. In his study of monuments in Scotland, for example, Angus Graham posited four categories: recumbent

¹⁵For a discussion of this development see: Angus Graham, "Headstones in Post-Reformation Scotland," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, 91 (1957-58), pp. 5-9; also see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 12 (1945), p. 265.

slabs, headstones, table-tombs and mural monuments. The table-tomb is quite clearly a transitional form between the recumbent slab and chest tomb, and has the basic spatial characteristics of the chest tomb. The mural monument is a subtype of the headstone, merely containing different surface decorations.¹⁶

Francaviglia, during his studies in Oregon, created a classification consisting of nine types. Most of these types are really subgroups of headstones. What he designates as "gothic" and "tablet," for example, are formally very similar, and obviously are both headstones.¹⁷

By the end of the eighteenth century, these three types of professionally made grave markers were being used in most regions of the British Isles. An awareness of these is necessary since the Newfoundland tradition developed directly from these British types. In fact, before 1830, most professionally-carved gravestones¹⁸ used in Newfoundland were made in England or Ireland and shipped to the island. In the 1830's, St. John's carvers, who themselves came from the British Isles, began to produce grave markers,

¹⁶Graham, "Headstones," pp. 5-9.

¹⁷Richard V. Francaviglia, "The Cemetery as an Evolving Cultural Landscape," American Association of Geographers, Annals, 61 (1971), pp. 501-509.

¹⁸The term "gravestone" will be used for any professionally produced marker made from stone used to mark the site of a grave. This includes headstones, recumbent slabs and chest tombs.

but they were influenced by the English and Irish types then in use. Unlike the New England area, a strong local stone-carving tradition did not arise in Newfoundland in the late seventeenth century, and gravestones were not made professionally on the island until the early 1800's. This absence of gravestone carvers is just one sign of the influence of British political and economic policies which shaped so many of the island's traditions. Before the formal and temporal distribution of gravemarkers in Newfoundland are discussed, it will be useful to briefly review these British policies in order to understand both the necessity of having gravestones made in the British Isles, and the specific patterns that emerged in Newfoundland.

Newfoundland's historical development has been closely tied to the fishery. For almost two hundred years, from 1600 until 1800, Newfoundland was considered as primarily a producer of dried fish, and this industry was the only economic venture encouraged by Great Britain. Since the fishery operated only during the summer months, the government felt that settlement on the island was unnecessary, since summer fishing crews could come out annually from England. This policy reduced the numbers of settlers that did come to Newfoundland during these two hundred years, and consequently would account, at least partially, for the small number of gravestones used on the island before 1800.

Organized settlement began in Newfoundland in the early 1600's, with colonies established with the backing of English financial interests. John Guy founded the first settlement at Cupids in 1610, and colonies were established in Renews in 1617 and Ferryland in 1621. Six early attempts at settlement were made in Newfoundland, but all failed financially. In spite of the withdrawal of English capital, the colonists still remained. As Matthews claims:

It cannot be said therefore that settlement had failed in Newfoundland. The financiers failed, as did most of those involved in mainland colonies, but the planters remained, gradually infused with skilled fishermen from Devon and Dorset.¹⁹

Although settlers were present in the Conception Bay and Southern Shore regions from the early 1600's, no gravestone dated before 1730 was recorded, and those made before 1800 were rare. The absence of gravestones before this date is due largely to the economic organization of the local out-port community. Unlike other Regions of North America, a broad system of craftsmen did not arise in Newfoundland communities that would contain a gravestone carver, nor did local fishermen possess the money to purchase a gravestone from external sources, such as England or Ireland.

Britain discouraged any type of settlement in Newfoundland during most of the seventeenth and eighteenth

¹⁹ Keith Matthews, "A History of the West of England-Newfoundland Fishery" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1968), p. 121.

centuries. Those immigrants who did come to the island could make their living only through fishing, since the climate did not allow subsistence agriculture.

With no local industries and virtually no agriculture, fishermen had to rely on outside sources to provide supplies for their daily needs. Since boats came annually from England to obtain fish during the summer months, these boats also began to supply the local residents with the food, clothing and fishing equipment which they could not produce locally themselves. Residents had only one form of payment to offer in return--fish--and soon a credit system began to develop. Suppliers from England provided local residents with all the provisions that they would need for the coming year in the spring. In return, the settlers would sell all their fish to these suppliers as payment for the goods that they received. A supplier knew, at least roughly, how much fish he could expect from each family, and knew approximately how much credit he could extend. In the fall, the yearly account was computed, and any debits or credits were carried over to the following year. West Country suppliers began to employ local residents as their agents, and each community soon had a merchant who monopolized the sale of goods within the community. These merchants were completely under the control of the West Country traders who:

... as the only persons coming regularly to Newfoundland were alone able to obtain their debts (since

there were no law courts) by force, or able to allow the debt to be carried over if necessary from year to year.²⁰

The merchants gradually assumed the leading roles in most communities; one woman in Bay Bulls commented recently that these merchants were the "aristocracy" of her community. The merchant, along with the clergyman and the local civic official, was economically able to purchase goods that would be unaffordable to most fishermen. Since he was receiving some type of payment for his services, both from the West Country traders and through the profits from the sales to local fishermen, the merchant could afford in many cases to buy a gravestone to mark the burial of a member of his family. The credit that the common fisherman received would usually only cover his annual essential supplies, and a luxury such as a professionally-carved gravestone from England or Ireland would be beyond his reach.

The merchant would also be the community resident most likely to feel that a gravestone was necessary to mark the grave of his family. As members of a rising middle class, the merchants were conscious of their social position in the community, and were anxious to display this position whenever possible. The purchase of a gravestone to mark his grave, or the grave of one of the members of his immediate family, would be a clear sign of his privileged social and

²⁰ Matthews, "History," p. 177.

economic status within the community, not only to the present inhabitants, but also to future generations. By marking his grave with a professional gravestone that others could not afford, the merchant could use this marker as a visual indication of his leading social status even in death.

Unlike other regions of North America, Newfoundland economic society was marked by a high division of labor. The island was one station in the triangular trade route between Britain, Newfoundland and the West Indies. Newfoundland fish could be exported directly to England, or it could be sold in the West Indies for rum and molasses. Each member of a local community was connected with the catching and processing of fish. Summers were spent catching and drying the fish, while activities to prepare for the fishery took place during the remainder of the year. A Newfoundlander's life was totally involved with the fishery, and the skills that he learned were usually connected with it. In Newfoundland, there was really only one important type of craftsman--the fisherman.

In most regions of North America that were settled during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, subsistence farming was accompanied by the growth of a system of craftsmen who supplied each household with the necessary manufactured goods. Local industries were formed, often backed by European capital. Newfoundland's only industry would remain the fishery, and the craftsmen who could sell their products

produced items that were connected entirely with this fishery.

Gravestone carving, like so many other crafts, did not develop in Newfoundland because of this emphasis on the fishery. Masons were not needed on the island, especially since almost all of the houses were built from wood. Since most communities operated on a credit system with the local merchant, masons could not expect payment for any work. The residents had only one commodity to trade--fish--and this had to be sold to the merchant.

The effect of this emphasis on the fishery in the development of other crafts is also evident. Hand weaving developed in most regions of North America settled by English immigrants during the early 1700's, primarily out of the necessity to produce clothing for the individual family. In spite of this pattern, hand weaving never developed in Newfoundland, except in the agricultural region of the Codroy Valley which was settled by immigrants from Nova Scotia. Material and commercially-produced clothing has always been purchased from the local merchant as part of the annual supplies that were received on credit. Even material for patchwork quilts was sometimes purchased. Natural dyes made from wild plants were rarely used. Again, commercially produced dyes were purchased from the merchant.²¹

²¹ For a discussion of the effects of this political and economic policy on the textile tradition see: Jerry Pocius, "Textile Traditions in Newfoundland," unpublished manuscript, Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, 1974-75.

Because of the complete emphasis on the fishery, and the closed nature of the economic system which resulted from this emphasis, craftsmen not connected directly with the fishery were not common on the island. Craftsmen from England or Ireland would find little opportunity to receive payment for their services. This lack of craftsmen who could produce objects not connected with the fishery partially explains the lack of large numbers of gravestones before 1800, and also the need to purchase these markers in England or Ireland.²²

The gravestone pattern found in Newfoundland was influenced by another attitude that was common during the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries. In most communities in Newfoundland, the merchant would frequently be the only resident who could afford to purchase a gravestone. Many merchants, however, looked upon their residence in Newfoundland as only temporary, and considered England as their home. When they came to Newfoundland, they kept their property in the West Country, and planned to return in the future. After several decades on the island, these merchants would frequently retire to their real home in England. Thus, the community resident in Newfoundland who would most

²²In contrast, for example, in the Boston area there were at least fifty working stonemasons by 1700; see G. Walker Jacobs, Stranger Stop and Cast an Eye: A Guide to Gravestones and Gravestone Rubbing (Brattleboro, Vt.: Stephen Greene Press, 1972), p. 56.

be able to purchase a gravestone returned to England to die. This practice also reduced the number of gravestones used in Newfoundland before 1800, and many of the stones, for example, outside the Anglican Church in Dartmouth, Devon, mentioned those buried there as former merchants in Newfoundland.

These economic and social factors significantly influenced the gravestone tradition in Newfoundland, and explain, to a large extent, the nature of this tradition. These markers were used as an expression of contact of the living with the dead. The social factors which influenced this channel of contact, and the trends indicated by the actual gravestone pattern, point to the fact that the construction of a gravestone was controlled largely by external norms, and the viability of expression was not great.

In order to understand the extent of this viability, a diachronic study is necessary of the types, distribution and origins of the grave markers that were recorded during this study. The first portion of this survey will specifically focus on the professionally-produced markers used in Newfoundland primarily before 1860. These markers, carved from stone, will be discussed first since they are datable--each stone contains a date of death--and their origins can sometimes be traced, since stone masons sometimes signed a stone with their surname and place of business, usually at the lower end of the stone. Following this discussion of professional gravestones, the local varieties will be

discussed. These markers were made by community residents from local materials, such as wood or field stone.

As previously discussed, three major types of gravestones were used in the British Isles by the eighteenth century, the headstone, recumbent slab and chest tomb. Since most gravestones used in Newfoundland before 1830 were made in the British Isles and shipped to the island, the Newfoundland formal pattern should resemble that found in the British Isles. In fact, only a portion of this formal pattern was carried over into Newfoundland.

Table 1 contains the numbers of gravestones by decade and their forms that were recorded in the communities studied. From this table, it is obvious that the headstone is overwhelmingly the most common type of marker found in Newfoundland. Although recumbent slabs and chest tombs were used extensively in England, their presence in Newfoundland was rare. The dominance of the headstone in the surveyed communities, and the absence of the chest tomb relates largely to the shipping costs of transporting a gravestone to Newfoundland. The headstone was the smallest in size of these three types, and therefore would be the cheapest to ship.

One of the few examples of the use of a chest tomb in Newfoundland points out these difficulties which most likely would have occurred. This chest tomb (photograph 23) dated 1842, is located in the old Roman Catholic cemetery

TABLE 1
GRAVESTONE DISTRIBUTION BY FORM IN TIME

	Recumbent Slabs	Chest Tombs	Headstones
1730			1
40			1
50			1
60			1
70	1		6
80			7
90			5
1800	3		10
1840			26
20		1	30
30	1		31
40	1	1	40
50			39
	7	2	198



Photograph 23. Chest tomb, dated May 18, 1842, Brigus.

in Brigus, and it is almost five feet in height and seven feet in length. This tomb was most likely carved in Ireland and shipped to Newfoundland unassembled. There were over fourteen pieces to this tomb, and the cost of shipping would approximate the cost of transporting fourteen headstones. The actual cost of carving such a monument was also much more than that of a simple headstone.²³ The choice of the type of gravestone, therefore, was determined to a certain extent by the shipping costs to Newfoundland, rather than personal preferences.

The distribution of gravestones over time can also be seen from the data in Table 1. Unlike other regions in North America, where gravestone usage was common by 1700, seventeenth century gravestones were not found in the Newfoundland areas surveyed, and only twenty three eighteenth century gravestones were recorded. The earliest gravestone recorded was dated 173- (the last digit of the date had broken off), and marked the grave of a Jenkins in Renew's, most likely the magistrate in the region at the time (photograph 24). There are older stones located in the

²³For example, a Welsh stone mason's account book from the mid-nineteenth century indicates that chest tombs were at least double the cost of headstones. An average headstone would cost £5, while a chest tomb could cost as much as £43; see: Frederick Burgess, "A Welsh Stone-Mason's Account Book a Hundred Years Ago," Monumental Journal, 25 (1958), p. 563.



Photograph 24. Jenkins stone, dated November 21, 173-, Renew.

Trinity-Bonavista area, but apparently none dated before 1720.²⁴ The absence of large numbers of gravestones before 1800 relates to many social and economic factors effecting the island's development (see above, pp. 231-238). The absence of gravestones before 1800 was also related to one other factor--the absence of clergymen in most communities before the nineteenth century.

In all communities that were surveyed for this study, the number of gravestones increased greatly with the arrival of a local church and clergyman. In Harbour Grace, for example, an Anglican church had been established in 1765, and gravestones were in use shortly after this date. The systematic use of gravestones corresponded in most communities to the building of a church and the establishment of a church-supervised burial ground.

This increase in the number of gravestones signalled a change in attitude toward the dead; this attitude was introduced into the community by the church. The location of each body had to be carefully marked with professional gravestones. The marker had the function of preventing the uncovering of a body during the digging of graves for other community members. From the viewpoint of religious

²⁴See: "Description of Old Headstone of 1724 at Trinity," Daily News, August 22, 1955, p. 5; "A 232 Year Old Relic - Tombstone at Bonavista," Evening Telegram, September 30, 1957, p. 4.

teaching, since the churches held that the dead body should be treated with respect, indicated partially through its burial in consecrated ground, the marker would locate the exact position of the body to permit future prayers for specific dead. Where, in the past, grave borders were merely decorated and the location of the grave marked with rough wooden or field stone markers, professional gravestones were now purchased if possible. These markers would frequently contain religious symbols and verse, and would provide an indication of the Christian nature of the burial that was formerly lacking.

The origins of the early gravestones used in Newfoundland can be traced through the stone mason's signature and place of business on the marker, and the type of stone itself that was used. Very little quarrying took place in Newfoundland before 1830,²⁵ and there were few trained stone masons on the island. Table 2 contains the number of signed gravestones by origin before 1860, and this clearly shows the early origins of most gravestones. The number of signed stones accurately reflects the origins of most gravestones for each decade.

²⁵Slate was quarried in the Trinity area, but apparently was never used for gravestones, since its color would be easily identified during field work; for comments see: J. Allen Howe, *The Geology of Building Stones*, Arnold's Geological Series (London: Edward Arnold, 1910), pp. 186-187.

TABLE 2

ORIGINS OF SIGNED GRAVESTONES RECORDED
IN NEWFOUNDLAND BEFORE 1860.

	West Country	Ireland	St. John's
1790	1		
1800			
10	3		
20	3		
30	4	1	1
40			3
50			16

Since early gravestones in Newfoundland were carved in the British Isles, it is necessary to examine these early stones as products of British craftsmen. How these stones were actually ordered and where they were obtained will first be discussed. Specific stones sent to Newfoundland will be described, as well as how representative these stones were of the English and Irish tradition at the time. This survey will make it clear that early gravestones sent to Newfoundland were largely chosen by economic factors, with the community members related to the dead having only a small part to play in their construction. The growth of the St. John's gravestone-carving tradition will be discussed, showing that although gravestones were now purchased

on the island, the living still had little control over their production.

When a death occurred in a community in Newfoundland, the living had to decide how they wanted to mark a grave, and whether a professional marker would be purchased. If a gravestone was to be carved, the family would contact the local merchant who would obtain these gravestones from craftsmen in the British Isles.

The family who wanted the gravestone usually did not decide specifically the decorative carving and the epitaph that the gravestone would contain. These were sometimes chosen by the merchant, the clergyman or the stone mason himself. The symbols and epitaphs, as well as the actual layout of the lettering on the stone, were frequently taken by these particular people from printed sources (see Chapter IX).

In rare instances, however, written instructions were given to the merchant. An example from Bay of Islands, on the west coast of Newfoundland, indicates the type of instructions:

To: T. Bird

Inform you of death of my Father
Send you tierce of Furs.
30 Beaver skins, 4 otter skins,
10 martins 10 yellow fox

send me
clothes
12 knives, 12 hatchets, salmon twine
gun

4½ ft. brl, 5/8 bore, caplin seine
20 fathom long, 3 deep.also a
headstone

Jane Brake
Died August 23, 1819
age 46
verse inclosed for Jane

Ralph Brake
Died May 4, 1842
Age 82
Bird can pick out verse for
Ralph

We have had a very bad fishing this
year with Salmon & Cod.

Sgd. Edward Brake & Brothers.²⁶

Ralph Brake was born in Dorset, and settled in Humber Arm,
near Corner Brook, around 1780. This letter was written to
the Bird family, merchants from Sturminster Newton in
Dorset, who had premises at Woody Point, Bonne Bay, near
Brake's home.

The family of the deceased could give the local mer-
chant merely the name and date of death that would be placed
on the gravestone, and he would forward this information to
the business that he represented in the West Country or
Ireland. Agents in the British Isles could then contact
stone carvers in their area with the order, and when the
gravestone was complete, the supply vessel would carry it to

²⁶ Newfoundland Provincial Archives. Great Britain.
108 (Masters Exhibits): 70.. Letters and Miscellaneous
Papers - Trade with Newfoundland and Labrador, 1838-44.
I owe this reference to Dr. John Mannion, Department of
Geography, Memorial University.

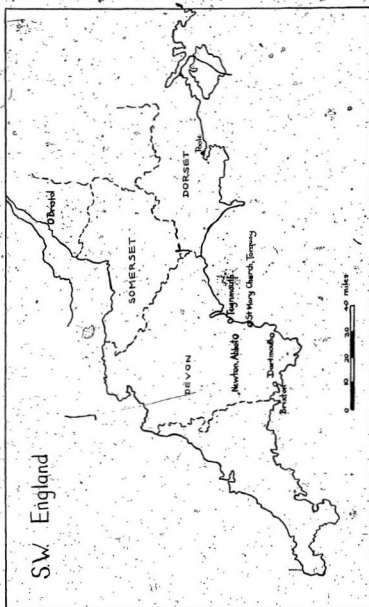
the particular Newfoundland community.

These early gravestones shipped to Newfoundland came from those regions of the British Isles that were engaged in the Newfoundland fishery. Map 7 shows the towns in the West Country where specific gravestones recorded in Newfoundland were carved. These communities in England were all relatively close to the coast, and shipped supplies to Newfoundland. Gravestones that were purchased for use on the island apparently were obtained from those carvers working in coastal towns in England. Markers purchased from these craftsmen would not have to be shipped long distances to the vessel that would carry them to the island.

When the ship arrived in the specific port in Newfoundland, the gravestone would most likely be unloaded onto a cart or slide, and then carried to the cemetery.²⁷ If a headstone were used, a hole would be dug in which the headstone would be placed. The task of uprighting larger headstones was quite difficult,²⁸ especially since most of the work had to be performed by hand. A headstone in

²⁷For the difficulties in transporting large stones by horse-drawn sleds or carts see: J.H. Bettey, The Island and Royal Manor of Portland: Some Aspects of Its History with Particular Reference to the Period 1750-1851 (Bristol: University of Bristol, 1970), p. 54; Rev. Herbert Pentin, "Old Portland," Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club, Proceedings, 37 (1916), p. 243.

²⁸For a description of the difficulties in uprighting a headstone see: Seamus Murphy, Stone Mad (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 66.



Map 7. West Country towns appearing on signed gravestones in Newfoundland

Ferryland, for example (photograph 25), now fallen over and cracked, was at least eight feet tall when standing, and approximately six inches thick. The transportation and uprighting of this marker, no doubt, posed many difficulties.

As already discussed, local residents who wanted a gravestone would contact the local merchant who would then order these markers in England or Ireland. Many months later, the stone would arrive at the specific community in Newfoundland, and could be placed on the grave. By examining specific markers recorded in Newfoundland, this control of the early gravestone tradition by carvers in the British Isles will become more clear.²⁹

Even with the absence of the name of a carver and his place of residence, the origin of most early gravestones recorded in this study is clear. A headstone in

²⁹ The actual tools and techniques used by stone-carvers in the British Isles has been described by several writers, and the carving of a gravestone by a local mason is rarely done today. Many headstones, for example, that are now used in the West Country are being imported pre-carved from Italy, and only the lettering is added locally. For descriptions of the tools and techniques that were formerly common see: J. Geraint Jenkins, Traditional Country Craftsmen (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 159-169; Freda Derrick, A Trinity of Craftsmen (London: Chapman and Hall, 1950), pp. 21-30; "A Few Useful Hints on Stone Carving for Beginners," Monumental Journal, 9 (1942), pp. 40-41; "Hand Cut Granite Letters," Monumental Journal, 9 (1942), pp. 111-112; "Lettering Marble by Hand," Monumental Journal, 9 (1942), pp. 13-14; Alec Millier, Stone and Marble Carving: A Manual for the Student Sculptor (London: Alec Tiranti Ltd., 1948); Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, The Book of English Trades and Library of the Useful Arts (London: F.C. & J. Rivington, 1821), pp. 316-319.



Photograph 25. William Saunders stone, dated April, 1770, Ferryland.

Renews (photograph 26), for example, is obviously carved from the type of grey limestone quarried in south Devon.

The inscription on this stone reads:

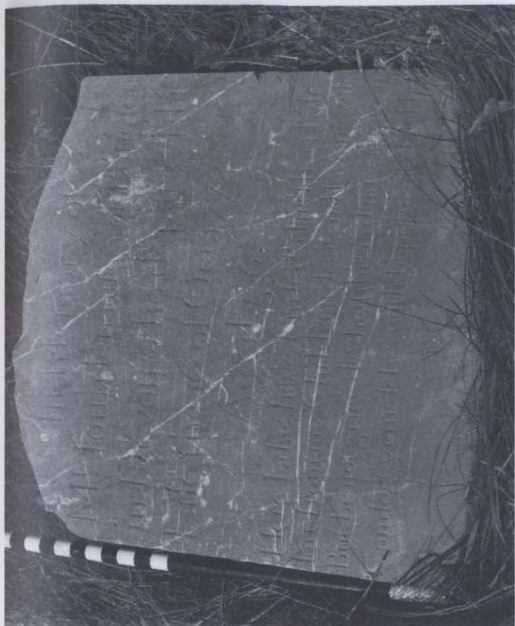
In Memory of
Mr. John Limbrey of Paignton
in Devon who departed this
Life the 16 of Octr 1770
Aged 56

Here I alas have Ended this short life
Far from my Children dear and loving
wife
But be not griev'd when this sad _____
is given
Comfort your selves with hope to meet
in Heav'n

John Limbrey's wife, or some other member of the family, had a mason in Paignton carve this headstone, which was then shipped to Newfoundland. Apparently, this mason carved two stones for the Limbrey family at about the same time.

Six days after John Limbrey died in Renewes, Thomas Limbrey died in Paignton. His headstone (photograph 27) in the Anglican churchyard at Paignton is made of the same type of limestone as John Limbrey's stone in Renewes. The shape was also identical, but the top of the marker in Renewes has been broken. Thomas Limbrey's stone in Paignton reads:

Here lieth the Body
of Mr. Thomas Limbrey who
died Oct. 23d 1770 Aged 54
Also Thomas his Son who Died
June 10 1768 in the 2nd Year of his
Age. And Joan his Daughter
died Aug. 26 1770, Aged 6 Years
Here lies the only Comfort of my life
Who was the best of Husbands to a wife
Since He is not, no Joy I now shall have
Till laid by him within the silent Grave,
There shall we sleep, and quietly remain
Till _____ meet in Heav'n again.



Photograph 26. John Limbrey stone, dated October 16, 1770, Renews.



Photograph 27. Thomas Limbrey stone, dated October 23, 1770, Paignton, Devon.

John and Thomas Limbrey may have been closely related. In any case, it is extremely likely that the same mason in Paignton carved the headstones located in Renews and the Paignton churchyard.

Mary Norris, of Brigus South on the Southern Shore, died on March 1, 1839, and a headstone was purchased for her grave. The top of this marker contains the name of the carver: "H. CROSSMAN, Sculp." Henry Crossman was a stone carver working in Newton Abbot in Devon at the time. His workshop was located at Wollborough Street in 1830,³⁰ and one of his relatives, William, had taken over the business by 1864.³¹

The Woodley family in St. Mary Church, Devon, carried on a flourishing stone-carving trade for many years. Two headstones in Paignton, approximately three miles from St. Mary Church, contain signatures of the Woodley family, one dated 1785 and the other 1795. Several of Woodley's products were shipped to Newfoundland.

³⁰ James Pigot, Pigot and Co.'s National Commercial Director, Comprising a Director . . . of the Merchants, Bankers, Professional Gentlemen, Manufacturers and Traders in All the Cities, Towns, . . . and Principle Villages in Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Huntingdonshire, Monmouthshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Somersetshire, Suffolk, Wiltshire, and the Whole of South Wales (London: James Pigot & Co., 1830), p. 81.

³¹ Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, p. 291.

A headstone in Brigus (photograph 28), dated September, 1814, clearly shows Woodley's signature, but the name of the town in Devon is illegible. A headstone in Port de Grave (photograph 29), dated December 16, 1828, contains the small emblem that Woodley used on the stone in Brigus. This emblem is badly worn on the Brigus marker, but the details are discernible by comparing the two stones. A double stone in Port de Grave, clearly contains the name "Woodley" on the top of the left stone, and "St. Mary Church" on top of the right. John Woodley headed the family business in Newton Abbot in 1830.³²

Several other south Devon carvers provided grave-stones for use in Newfoundland. A gravestone in Petty Harbour, dated September 18, 1812, was carved in Teignmouth by a mason named Knight. This most likely was John Knight, who was working at Dawlish Road in Teignmouth in 1830.³³ Jacob Grant carved a headstone found in Port de Grave (photograph 1, right stone, p. xciii), dated March 1, 1820. The Grant family worked as stone carvers in Dartmouth during the early nineteenth century.³⁴ In Ferryland, a headstone dated December, 1827, was carved by a Devon mason by the name of

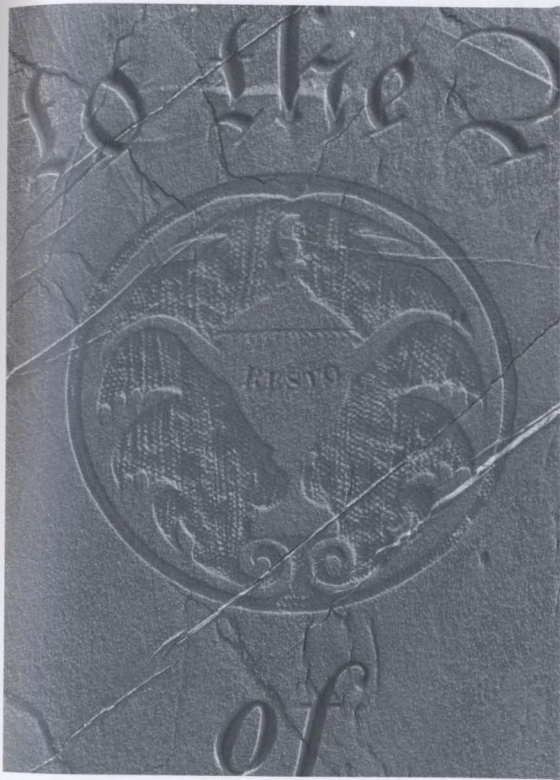
³² Pigot, Pigot and Co., p. 152.

³³ Ibid., p. 144.

³⁴ Pigot lists three Grants as working in Dartmouth in 1830: John Grant, North Ford; Robert Grant, Harness Street; George Grant, Market Street; see: Ibid., p. 27.



Photograph 28. Detail of Woodley's signature on a gravestone in Brigus.



Photograph 29. Woodley's trade symbol on a gravestone in Port de Grave.

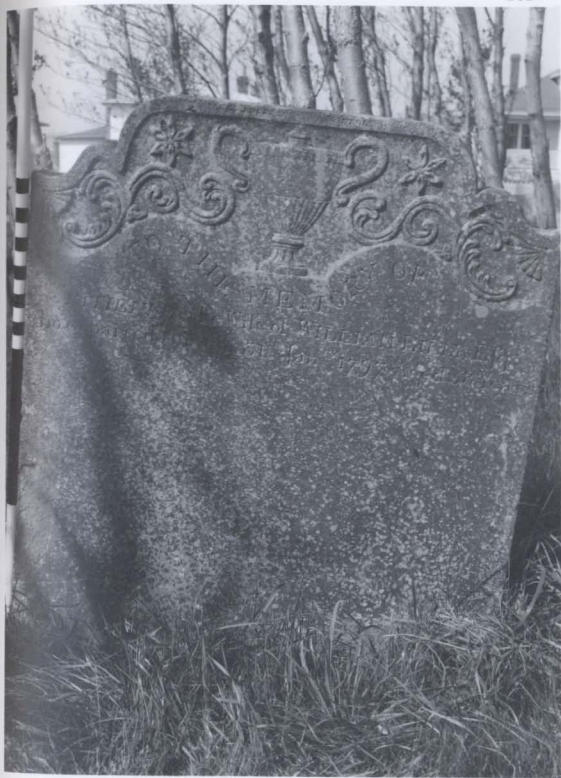
Petherbridge. A Dartmouth craftsman, Pervman, carved a stone dated November 21, 1827, found in Bishop's Cove. In Port Kirwan, a stone marking the grave of a Roman Catholic (see above, p.158) was carved in Devon, though the name of the carver is now illegible.

Only one stone was recorded that contained the name of a Dorset carver: This headstone, containing a large amount of verse, was found in Brigus, and was dated March 22, 1850. The stone was signed Swaffield from Poole, most likely the Joseph Swaffield whose business was located on Market Street, near the waterfront, in 1830.³⁵ The Swaffield business had moved to West Quay Road by 1842.³⁶ A trade directory of 1848 does not list any Swaffields, but this stone in Brigus indicates that the family was obviously still at work.

The earliest signed stone that was recorded during this study is located in Harbour Grace, dated January 31, 1797 (photograph 30). This marker was also the only stone recorded that contained the name of a carver from the Bristol region. The name "Bristol" is clearly visible at the top of the stone, but the carver's name which precedes

³⁵Pigot, Pigot and Co., p. 272.

³⁶James Pigot, Pigot and Co.'s Royal National Commercial Directory and Topography of the Counties of Derbyshire, Dorsetshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Somersetshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, Worcestershire, Comprising Lists of All Persons in Trade and of Nobility, Gentry and Clergy (London: Pigot and Co., 1842).



Photograph 30. William Lilly stone, dated January 31, 1797, located in Harbour Grace, and carved by a Bristol mason, Gollledge.

it is illegible. Several letters of the name can be read, and by using several trade directories published at the time, this surname can be identified as "Gollledge." Edward Gollledge was working as a "marble mason" in Bristol in 1775,³⁷ but a directory that was published in 1797, the year the stone in Harbour Grace was made, fails to list a Gollledge as working in Bristol, an obvious omission.³⁸

The practice of masons signing stones in the Waterford area of Ireland appears to be less common than that of masons in the West Country, but the Irish origin of many of the gravestones found in Newfoundland is clear. In the old churchyard at Ballybricken in Waterford, for example, a table tomb dated April 26, 1829, contains an almost illegible

³⁷ James Sketchley, Sketchley's Bristol Directory: Including Clifton, Bedminster, and the Out-Parishes of St. James and St. Philip (Bristol: author, 1775), p. 37.

³⁸ Peter Barford and John Wilkes, The University British Director of Trade, Commerce, and Manufacture, Comprehending Lists of the Inhabitants of London, Westminster, and Borough of Southwark; and of All the Cities, Towns, and Principle Villages, in England and Wales; with the Mails and Other Coaches, Stage-Waggons, Hoys, Packets, and Trading Vessels, to which Is Added, a Genuine Account of the Drawbacks and Duties Chargeable at the Custom-House on All Goods and Merchandize, Imported, Exported, or Carried Coastwise, with a Particular of the Public Offices of Every Denomination; His Majesty's Court, and Ministers of State; the Peers of the Realm, and Parliament of Great Britain; the Court of Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, Common-Council, and Livery of London; together with an Historical Detail of the Antiquities, Curiosities, Trade, Polity, and Manufactures, of Each City, Town, and Village, the Whole Comprising a Most Interesting and Instructive History of Great Britain (2nd ed.; London: British Directory Office, 1797), II, 135-182.

design which is found on many of the headstones marking the graves of Irish in Newfoundland. The top of this tomb is identical in shape to the headstones on the island containing this design. Most likely these stones were used in Waterford as table tombs, but to save money, only the top was shipped to Newfoundland, where it was used as a headstone.

A cemetery at St. John's Alley in Waterford was cleared of its markers about twenty years ago, and the grave-stones were piled inside a ruined chapel next to the new park. Several headstones found inside this ruined chapel, dating from the early 1800's (photograph 31) are made of the same material and contain an identical design to several headstones recorded in Newfoundland. A marker at Port de Grave (photograph 32) is the best example of this type, but there are identical stones in Upper Island Cove, Brigus and the same cemetery in Port de Grave. These stones were carved by the same mason in Waterford, and shipped to Newfoundland.

The only gravestone signed by an Irish craftsman was recorded in Brigus. This was carved by a Waterford mason named Kennedy, and is dated July 3, 1857. In 1846, a Henry Kennedy was working at 32 John's Bridge in Waterford, very close to the cleared cemetery at St. John's Alley.³⁹

³⁹ I. Slater, National Commercial Directory of Ireland: Including, in Addition to the Trades' Lists, Alphabetical Directories of Dublin, Belfast, Cork and Limerick, to which Are Added, Classified Directories of the Important English



Photograph 31. Broken gravestones inside the ruined chapel at St. John's Alley in Waterford, Co. Waterford.



Photograph 32. Detail of the Richard Shea stone, dated April 4, 1826, Port de Grave.

Kennedys were working as monumental masons until at least 1894, when their business was located at Parnell Street in Waterford.⁴⁰

The increasing scope of the Newfoundland trade in the early nineteenth century is indicated by several gravestones that were carved in other regions of the British Isles. A stone in Harbour Grace, dated May 12, 1833, was carved by J. Smith of Liverpool; a stone in Brigus, dated October 4, 1850, was carved by a Whitelaw in London, and a stone in St. John's, dated August 17, 1854, was carved in Glasgow by a Mossman.

Surveys in areas of Newfoundland not visited during this study would no doubt indicate the presence of gravestones carved before 1830 signed by West Country or Irish craftsmen. A woman in Port de Grave can remember that a gravestone, only recently removed, was carved in Brixton in Devon.

The relatively large number of signed gravestones recorded in Newfoundland that were carved in Devon cannot be entirely explained by the domination of the south Devon merchants in particular regions of the island. Trade between Newfoundland and the West Country took place between

Towns of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, West Bromwich, Leeds, Sheffield, and Bristol; and, in Scotland, those of Glasgow, Paisley and Greenock (Manchester and London: I. Slater, 1846), p. 333.

⁴⁰ I. Slater, Slater's Royal National Commercial Directory of Ireland (Manchester: I. Slater & Co., 1894), p. 343.

specific ports. The Southern Shore, after the mid-eighteenth century, was dominated by business interests from south Devon, and a large number of gravestones from this part of England would not be unusual. The Conception Bay region, however, received merchants from north and south Devon, Dorset, the Bristol area and the Channel Islands.⁴¹ In spite of this diversity of trade, most signed gravestones that were recorded in the Conception Bay area also were carved in south Devon. The reason for this concentration of gravestones from this region of England may be explained in part by the type of material that was used for these markers.⁴²

In Dorset and Devon, two major types of limestone were quarried and used for gravestones. The southern coast of Dorset contains some of the richest stone deposits in all of Britain, centered around the area from the Isle of Portland to Swanage. A type of light limestone has been quarried in this region since the middle ages, and is known as

⁴¹For a history of this regional nature of Newfoundland trade see: Matthews, "History," pp. 184-185.

⁴²Irish gravestones used in both the Conception Bay and Southern Shore areas before 1830 were imported from the Waterford-Wexford region of Ireland, and were carved from limestone quarried in these counties. For brief surveys of the quarries in this region see: "The Stone of Ireland," Monumental Journal, 21 (1954), pp. 757-758; 22 (1955), pp. 45-46; G. Henry Kinahan, "Marbles and Limestones," Royal Geological Society of Ireland, Journal, n.s., 8 (1885-89), pp. 123-204; Rev. R.H. Ryland, The History, Topography and Antiquities of the County and City of Waterford; with an Account of the Present State of the Peasantry of that Part of the South of Ireland (London: John Murray, 1824), pp. 230-232; Murphy, Stone Mad, p. 227.

the Purbeck and Portland formations.⁴³ Major quarries have been located at Swanage,⁴⁴ Portland,⁴⁵ and Purbeck,⁴⁶ and stone from these regions has been used for local gravestones since the early 1700's. This stone can be carved quite easily and was used in all types of ornamental decoration on buildings. When this type of stone was used for gravestones, elaborate symbols and decorations could be carved

⁴³For a general history of the quarrying of stone in this region see: William Page, ed., The Victoria History of the County of Dorset (London: Archibald Constable, 1908), II, 331-334; for a brief survey of the types of stone used throughout England for gravestones see: Pamela Gover, "Country Churchyards: The Development of the Memorial," Commemorative Art, 33 (1966), pp. 224-225.

⁴⁴For comments about the Swanage quarries see: Page, Victoria History, II, 338; W.J. Arkell, "The Names of the Strata in the Purbeck and Portland Stone Quarries," Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, Proceedings, 66 (1944), pp. 159, 161.

⁴⁵For accounts of the Portland stone quarries see: Stone Firms, Ltd., Some Notes on the History of Portland Stone (Portland: Stone Firms, Ltd., ca. 1965); J.E. Malory, "Places and Products, VIII: Portland Stone," Geographical Magazine, 9 (1939), pp. 327-338; Mrs. Elizabeth Otter, "Extracts from an Old Portlander's Diary," Portland Souvenir Magazine (2nd ed.; Portland: Royal Naval Association, n.d.), p. 24; A.M. Wallis, "The Portland Stone Quarried," Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club, Proceedings, 12 (1891), pp. 187-191; "The Portland Quarries," Monumental and Architectural Journal, 7 (1940), pp. 317-318, 322.

⁴⁶The most complete account of the Purbeck quarries can be found in Eric Benfield, Purbeck Shop: A Stone Worker's Story of Stone (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1940); see also: P.N. Dawe, "Inventory of a Purbeck Marbler's Goods, 1689," Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset, 78 (1965), pp. 241-242; "Purbeck Stone," Monumental Journal, 10 (1943), pp. 94, 98; Marion E. Chappell, "Purbeck Stone: Past and Present," Commemorative Art, 33 (1966), pp. 416-418.

into the stone, and this quality made this type of limestone relatively expensive.

The limestone that was quarried in south Devon was frequently referred to as "limestone in grauwacke"⁴⁷ or simply "Devonian limestone."⁴⁸ Small quarries throughout Devon located near these deposits produced supplies for local stone masons. Quarries were located at Plymouth, Torquay, St. Mary Church, Babbacombe, Brixham, Petit Tor, Totnes, Dartington, Berry Pomeroy, Ipplepen, Ogwell, Ashburton, Newton Abbot and Chudleigh.⁴⁹ This type of limestone was not as porous as the Dorset varieties, and usually "compact as a rule, but . . . often penetrated by small

⁴⁷Great Britain. Ordinance Geological Survey, Report on the Geological Survey of Cornwall, Devon and West Somerset (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1839), p. 68 ff.

⁴⁸Rev. W.S. Symonds, Records of the Rocks; or, Notes on the Geology, Natural History, and Antiquities of North and South Wales, Devon and Cornwall (London: John Murray, 1872), p. 286; for a recent survey see: Great Britain. Natural Environment Research Council, British Regional Geology: South-West England (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1969), pp. 26-30.

⁴⁹Howe, Geology of Building Stones, p. 186; for comments about quarries in south Devon see also: John Britton and Edward Wedlake Brayley, Devonshire and Cornwall Illustrated from Original Drawings by Thomas Allom, W.H. Bertlett, & c. with Historical and Topographical Descriptions (London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher, and P. Jackson, 1832), p. 98; "Some Interesting Facts about the Granite Trade in 1867," Monumental Journal, 9 (1942), pp. 61-62, 67; Walter E. Minchinton, Industrial Archaeology in Devon (Totnes: Dartington Amenity Research Trust, 1968), pp. 13-17; D. St. Leger-Gordon, Devonshire, County Books Series (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1950), p. 100.

veins of calcite."⁵⁰ This stone was blue-grey in colour, and its compact texture did not permit extensive carving. Unlike the limestone quarried in the Purbeck-Portland region, gravestones made from this south Devon limestone could receive little more than lettering. Decorative or symbolic motifs could not be added, and these limitations reduced the demand for this type of stone over the Dorset varieties.⁵¹ Because of this quality, Devonian limestone most likely was cheaper than the Dorset varieties. The actual carving of the gravestone also would require less time, and reduce the cost of this marker.

Many of the early gravestones in Newfoundland are clearly made from south Devon limestone (photographs 10, p. 154, and 33). The large proportion of signed gravestones on the island made from this type of material relates partially to the apparent low costs of these markers. Merchants in the Conception Bay area traded regularly with Poole, but

⁵⁰ Howe, Geology of Building Stones, p. 186; for similar comments see: Charles Vancouver, General View of the Agriculture of the County of Devon; with Observations on the Means of Its Improvement, Drawn Up for the Consideration of the Board of Agriculture, and Internal Improvement (London: Richard Phillips, 1808), p. 68.

⁵¹ For examples of the typical elaborate carving found on Dorset gravestones see: Pamela Gover, "Some Dorset Churchyards," Commemorative Art, 32 (1965), pp. 20-24; for an example of the widespread demand for gravestones made from Portland stone in the eighteenth century, and their costs see: Frederick Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments: Wages and Prices in the Past," Monumental Journal, 20 (1953), p. 317.



Photograph 33. Margaret Jacob stone, dated December 16, 1828, located in Port de Grave, and made from south Devon limestone.

apparently would obtain gravestones from south Devon ports. The purchase of the stone was determined largely by the economic costs, and the cheapest type of marker was usually bought. The economic factor, in turn, would severely limit the decorative motifs on the gravestones, and explain to a great extent why early Newfoundland gravestones, carved largely in south Devon, are remarkably plain in design. With the rise of the stone carving craft in St. John's, the construction of the gravestone took place at a closer distance to the local community where these markers were used. The viability of this channel of contact of the living with the dead, however, did not increase substantially.

The rise of the stone carving trade in Newfoundland was largely due to the changing economic status of the colony. During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, Newfoundland saw an increase in its economic and political independence, and many goods that were formerly supplied by West Country merchants were now manufactured on the island. Much of this political and economic independence was triggered by the American Revolutionary War and the Napoleonic Wars, which isolated Newfoundland from England and forced her to begin to import skilled craftsmen to manufacture needed items. Matthews, writing about the effects of the American Revolution, stated:

Until 1775 the population of St. John's consisted principally of merchants, a few shopkeepers, publicans, clerks, and labourers, but during the war a flood of

immigrants established various 'service' trades which had previously been available only back in England.⁵²

The local merchants began to look to St. John's more and more for their supplies, and the Water Street merchants in the city gradually replaced the West Country and Irish businesses who were formerly contacted.

An unpublished census of St. John's, taken in 1794-1795, reveals the numbers of skilled craftsmen who had settled in the city by the turn of the century.⁵³ Three city residents were listed in this census as masons: Jas. Hayes, That. Todrige, and Thos. Walker.⁵⁴ Although these men could have carved gravestones that were sold in the St. John's area, no signed examples of their work remain.

One of the major factors that hindered the initial development of the stone carving trade in Newfoundland was the lack of quarried stone on the island. In spite of the presence of various types of stone on the island, none was suitable for building or carving, and cut pieces had to be imported. As long as this stone was imported from the British

⁵² Matthews, "History," pp. 489-490.

⁵³ For comments about this census see: George M. Story, "Newfoundland: Fishermen, Hunters, Planters, and Merchants," in Herbert Halpert and G.M. Story, eds., Christmas Mummings in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore and History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), pp. 24-25.

⁵⁴ William Kirwin and James Feltham, "An Index to the Names in 'An Account of Inhabitants Residing in the Harbor and District of St. John's, 1794/1795'," typescript, Memorial University of Newfoundland Library, p. 19.

Isles, the cost of a finished gravestone would not be substantially cheaper than if a blank stone were shipped from England or Ireland and carved in Newfoundland. In the early 1830's, however, trade began to increase between Canada and Newfoundland, and cut stone from Nova Scotia began to be sold at the docks in St. John's.⁵⁵ For example, in May, 1830, the following advertisement appeared in a St. John's newspaper, announcing the arrival of such a shipment of stone:

By the Subscribers
A Quantity of Square
Freestone
Of good quality, suitable
for Building

J. DUNSCOMB & Co.

4th May, 1830.⁵⁶

Shipments of stone from Nova Scotia began to increase in the 1830's, and by 1846, an advertisement in a paper specifically mentioned where stone suitable for "tombstones" could be purchased in Nova Scotia.⁵⁷

With the increased importation of stone to the island, the stone carving trade in St. John's began to develop.

⁵⁵For a discussion of some of these quarries in Nova Scotia see: William Inglis Morse, Gravestones of Acadie and Other Essays on Local History, Genealogy and Parish Records of Annapolis County, Nova Scotia (London: A. Smith & Co., 1929), p. 3.

⁵⁶Newfoundland Gazette, 22:1184 (May 4, 1830), p. {3}.

⁵⁷See figure 6; taken from: Times, 2 (December 23, 1846), p. 3.

PRICES
OF
FREE-STONE
FROM
ACADIA QUARRY,
PICTOU, NOVA SCOTIA.
*Delivered at Pictou, or on board a Vessel
at Pictou.*
FOR THE YEAR 1847.

	£	s.	d.
Ashler from 2 to 5 feet long, and 6 inches thick, per foot (superficial)	0	0	9
For all Ashler, when ordered over 6 inches thick, a penny per inch will be charged for the additional thickness.			
Door and Window Sills from 4 to 6 feet long and 6 inches thick, per foot (superficial)	0	0	9½
Ditto from 5 to 6 ft. long do. do.	0	0	10
Ditto 6 to 7 do. do.	0	0	10½
Ditto 7 to 8 do. do.	0	0	11
Ditto 8 to 9 do. do.	0	1	0
Door and Window Heads, from 4 to 5 ft. long and 9 in. thick, per foot (superficial)	0	0	10½
Ditto from 5 to 6 ft. long do. do.	0	0	11
Ditto 6 to 7 do. do.	0	1	0
Ditto 7 to 8 do. do.	0	1	2
Ditto 8 to 9 do. do.	0	1	3
Ryebats and Quoins, 2 feet long, 1 foot high and 9 inches head, each	0	2	0
Ditto ditto ditto 12 inches ditto	0	2	3
Extra sizes, per foot cube	0	1	3
Blocks under 5 ft. cube per foot	0	1	5
Ditto 7 feet ditto	0	1	7
Ditto 10 ditto	0	1	9
Ditto 15 ditto	0	1	11
Ditto 20 ditto	0	2	2
Ditto 25 ditto	0	2	3
Ditto 30 ditto	0	2	4
Ditto 40 ditto	0	2	6
Door Steps, from 4 to 6 ft. long, per foot (superficial)	0	0	10
Ditto from 6 to 8 ditto ditto	0	1	0

Door Platforms or Landings, measuring from 20 to 25 feet superficial, from 6 to 8 inches thick, per foot	0	3	0
Ditto from 25 to 30 ft., per foot	0	3	3
Ditto 30 to 35 ditto	0	3	6
Ditto 35 to 40 ditto	0	3	10
Chimney Top Ashler, 4 or 5 in. thick, per foot (superficial)	0	0	7½
Coping, 3 feet long, 2 to 2½ ft. wide, 9 or 9½ inches thick	0	0	8
Ditto ditto 3 ditto, 4 to 4½ ditto	0	1	0
When any of the above Stones are ordered to dimensions, one penny additional, per foot, will be charged.			
Tomb Stones, 7 ft. long, 3 feet wide, 4 to 5 inches thick	2	7	6
Ditto 6½ do. 3½ in. 3 to 4½ do.	1	12	0
Head Stones, 6 do. 2½ do. 3 4½ ditto	0	16	0
Ditto 3½ to 5 3-12 feet long, 2 2-12 to 2 4-12 wide	0	14	0
Ditto 5 3-12 to 5 6-12 ditto, 2 2-12 to 2 3-12 ditto	0	13	0
Ditto 5 to 5 3-12 ditto, 2 to 2 2-12 ditto	0	11	0
Stone for ditto below 15 and above 4½ feet	0	0	10
Hearth Stones from 4 to 4½ ft. long, and 3 or 3½ in. thick	0	0	8
Ditto 4½ to 4 ditto	0	0	7½
Flags below these sizes and thickness, per foot	0	0	7
S. G. ARCHIBALD. Agent, St. John's, Newfoundland.			
December 23.			

Figure 6. Advertisement from a Nova Scotia quarry appearing in a St. John's newspaper in 1846 which mentions the sale of stone suitable for "Tomb Stones".

Local merchants who received orders for gravestones would now contact craftsmen in St. John's. In some cases, too, the individual who wanted to purchase a stone would travel to St. John's to choose a marker at the carver's place of business. Gravestone manufacture, however, was still almost totally controlled by the craftsman. In the past, he lived in the British Isles; now he resided in St. John's. This external control of the construction of gravestones is evident from two rapid changes which occurred during a span of approximately thirty years in the basic materials used for these markers and their design. Carvers in St. John's dictated what types of stones would be used, and the local merchant or resident had to conform to these styles.

Between 1830 and 1860, the production of most gravestones used in Newfoundland changed from the British Isles to the island itself. This shift was marked in part by the importation of stone into Newfoundland which could be used for gravestones. This new type of stone, usually limestone imported from Nova Scotia, could be worked much more extensively than the south Devon variety used in so many earlier markers. This increased ability for carving was met with a rapid change in the decorative styles of the gravestones. Before 1830, most markers were quite plain, but now willows and urns began to appear. Craftsmen produced stones which contained elaborate symbols, not because these were demanded by local residents, but because carving was now possible.

Masons were largely responsible for this abrupt change in style, and local residents accepted this major alteration of the grave marker.⁵⁸

Around 1860, the use of white marble became common in all the communities studied,⁵⁹ largely through its importation from Vermont and Italy.⁶⁰ This white marble was less expensive than the limestone varieties formerly used, and the stones were often made in a smaller and usually standard size.

⁵⁸ During field work in the West Country, gravestones in Devon were found to remain quite plain after 1830, indicating that the type of stone dictated the style, and that the Newfoundland change was not merely a development of a trend in the British Isles. Most eighteenth century gravestones in Dorset and other parts of England contained elaborate carvings, unlike the Devon, and therefore the Newfoundland, style; for examples of this carving from various regions of England see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 12 (1945), pp. 123-127; 157-161.

⁵⁹ This inexpensive white marble began to be used in most parts of eastern North America in the early nineteenth century; for various comments see: Timothy Dwight, Travels in New England and New York (1821-22; rpt. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), I, 137; Thomas J. Hannon, Jr., "Nineteenth Century Cemeteries in Central-West Pennsylvania," Pioneer America Society, Proceedings, 2 (1973), p. 32; Charles L. Wallis, Stories on Stone: A Book of American Epitaphs (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 202.

⁶⁰ An advertisement for the St. John's stone carver, John Skinner, which appeared in 1885 stated that he was a dealer in both Italian and American marble; for this advertisement see: John Sharpe, Directory for the Towns of St. John's, Harbor, Grace and Carbonear, Newfoundland, for 1885-86 (St. John's: n.p., 1885), p. 182. Angelo Skinner, another St. John's stone carver, obtained much of his marble from the Vermont-Marble Co. in Vermont; see: Patrick K. Devine, Ye Olde St. John's (St. John's: n.p., 1939), p. 133.

The change from gravestones made from limestone to white marble was quite extreme, and the white stone provided a contrast to the subdued colors of the Newfoundland landscape. The use of this type of stone was also apparently met with little opposition, and again, the change was dictated largely by the stone carvers, rather than the demands of local residents.

Unlike Newfoundland, this rapid change in the appearance of the gravestone was met in England by a great deal of protest, led not by residents, however, but by the clergy.

A nineteenth century religious reformer complained of the rise of gravestones made from this material by stating:

Look at our own Cemetery (Exeter) with its varied and hilly ground, how changed would be the now dreary prospect were it studded, not with a cold white pavement of tombs, but with a hundred Crosses rising in a hundred varieties of form . . . 61

⁶¹ Theophilus Smith, Original Designs for Christian Memorials Adapted for Churchyards and Cemeteries, Consisting of Headstones, Wood and Stone Crosses, Coped Tombs, Altar Tombs, Incised Slabs, &c., together with Remarks on Burial Places and Christian Memorials, Inscriptions, Texts, and Epitaphs, Masonry, &c. (London: J.H. & J. Parker, 1864), p. 12; for more recent comments about the use of white marble for gravestones see: Frederick Burgess, "The White Marble Controversy," Monumental Journal, 15 (1948), pp. 301-304, 363-366; Frederick Burgess, "English Churchyard Sculpture," Geographical Magazine, 22 (1949-50), p. 366; James Stevens Curl, The Victorian Celebration of Death (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1972), p. 148; Twelve Bishops, "A Monumental Scandal," in J.W. Robertson Scott, ed., The Countryman Book: A Selection of Articles and Illustrations from The Countryman (London: Odhams Press Limited, 1948), pp. 216-219; British Institute of Industrial Art, Graveyard Memorials in Stone and Wood (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), p. 7; Percy Dearmer, The Parson's

By organized campaigns, clergymen and stone masons in England limited, at least partially, the use of this imported marble for gravestones. Unlike England, however, this type of marker quickly replaced the limestone varieties in Newfoundland without apparently challenging local church guidelines as to the type of stone which should be used, or the products of a local quarrying industry. Thus, another major change had taken place in gravestone design and materials, dictated by the local craftsmen, and residents accepted this abrupt change. These changes become clearer in a discussion of the carvers who worked in St. John's during this thirty year period.

The earliest gravestone signed by a Newfoundland carver that was recorded in this study was dated July 2, 1836. This stone, in the general Protestant cemetery in St. John's, was carved by James Gray. A stone in Harbour Grace, dated 1842, was also carved by Gray, and both markers, which contain only lettering, indicate his plain style. His work signals the shift of the carving of gravestones used in Newfoundland from the British Isles to the island, but his products are virtually identical to English and Irish varieties.

Handbook: Containing Practical Directions Both for Parsons and Others as to the Management of the Parish Church and Its Services According to the English Use as Set Forth in the Book of Common Prayer, with an Introductory Essay on Conformity to the Church of England (London: Grant Richards, 1902), pp. 429-430.

The work of Edward Rice, another St. John's carver, clearly indicates the changes which gravestones in Newfoundland experienced during the early nineteenth century. The earliest recorded example of Rice's signed work was found in Brigus, and consists of a plain headstone with an incised cross as the only decorative work. This stone, dated March 2, 1850, contains a similar style to the early plain Irish gravestones imported to the island. Several months later, however, Rice carved another stone for use in Brigus which was elaborately carved. This gravestone contained two urns and a circular motif in the tympanum, and was clearly a radical departure from the plain decorative tradition of the past. Rice's contact with the more elaborate Irish gravestone tradition is evident in a stone that he carved for use in Harbour Grace, dated August 29, 1850 (photograph 49, p. 323).

Like an Irish stone found in Port Kirwan, this marker contains the emblems of the passion, again a drastic change from most of the plainly carved stones imported from Ireland.

The most prosperous of all nineteenth century St. John's stone carvers was Alexander Smith, and his work clearly indicates the extensive use of decorative carving, as well as the complete acceptance of the use of white marble. The earliest recorded work of Smith's was found at Bareneed, dated May 23, 1851 (photograph 34). This gravestone contains an elaborately carved tympanum containing a cherub and shroud draped over the top of the stone. This



Photograph 34. John Richards stone, dated April 9, 1853, Bareneed, carved by Alexander Smith.

stone is one of four located in Bareneed, all standing in a row, that were carved by Smith with virtually the same design. In his earliest works, Smith exhibited the elaborate carving styles that were absent ten years before.

Smith's production of elaborately decorated stones is evident from two gravestones found in the United Church cemetery in Brigus. These markers both contain an abstract willow tree in the tympanum (photographs 35 and 36), a motif that was unknown in Newfoundland until the 1850's. One stone was dated December 23, 1851 (photograph 35), while the other was dated January 13, 1846 (photograph 36). By 1853, Smith had begun to import white marble to use in the production of gravestones, probably the first carver to do so in Newfoundland. A stone at Cupids (photograph 37) was carved in 1853, and a decade after this stone was made, virtually all gravestones in Newfoundland utilized this material.

Smith's workshop was located at 276 Gower Street, and he called his business "St. John's Marble Works." He was in business until at least 1885,⁶² and his work was recorded in all regions that were surveyed in this study.

A relatively large number of stone carvers worked in St. John's during the mid-nineteenth century, apparently as a result of the increasing desire to have a professionally-made marker placed on the grave. A large stone in Brigus,

⁶²Sharpe, Directory, p. 224.



Photograph 35. Detail of stone carved by Alexander Smith located in Brigus, dated December 23, 1851.



Photograph 36. Detail of stone carved by Alexander Smith located in Brigus, dated January 13, 1846.



Photograph 37. George Alfred stone, dated March 5, 1853, located in Cupids, and carved from white marble.

dated December 23, 1845, was carved by a St. John's mason, G. Bonfield. A gravestone in Port Kirwan was carved by a MacKim, dated February 11, 1853. MacKim's family carried on a stone carving business in St. John's until at least 1871. Another stone at Port Kirwan, dated August 23, 1855, was carved by a St. John's mason by the name of Cameron. J. Hay was carving gravestones in St. John's at least by 1856; markers at Bay Bulls, dated April 3, 1856, and Cupids, dated June 30, 1857, indicate the widespread distribution of his work. Hay may have been related to the James Hayes listed in the 1794 census. J. Hay was working until at least 1871,⁶³ and it appears that a relative, perhaps his son, William Hay, took over the business by 1877.⁶⁴ One gravestone in Port de Grave is signed by a Royce, dated April 30, 1848, although there is no place of business below the surname. This carver may have been working also in St. John's.

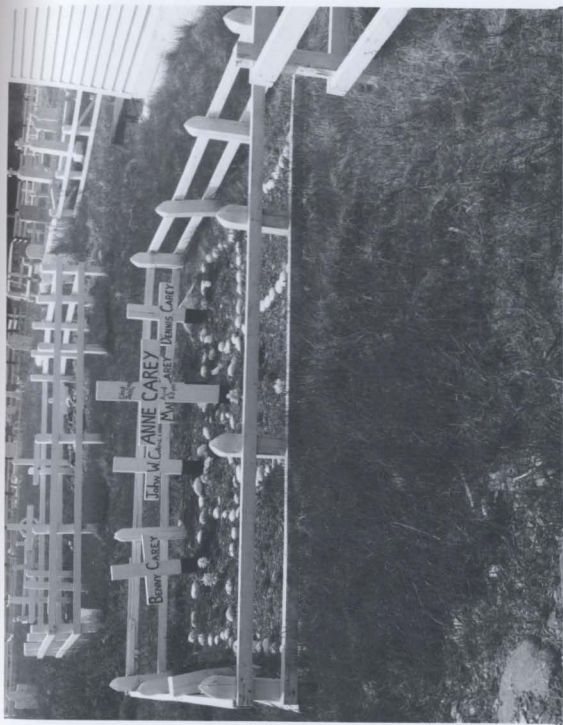
Although the construction of most grave-markers was controlled by specialists from outside the community, there were instances, however, when markers were made locally and

⁶³ John Lovell, Lovell's Gazetteer of British North America, to Contain Descriptions of Every City, Town, Village, and in the Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island (Montreal: Dominion Directory Office, 1871), p. 314.

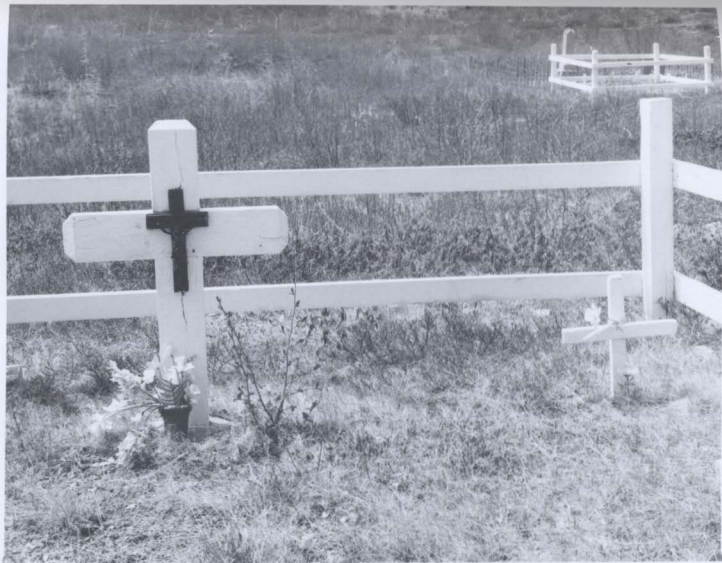
⁶⁴ John A. Rochfort, comp., Business and General Directory of Newfoundland, 1877: Containing Classified Lists of the Business Men of St. John's, and the Leading Towns and Districts of the Colony, with Appendix Containing Local Governmental and Other Information of a General Character (Montreal, Lovell, 1877), p. 103.

the construction of these markers afforded a more viable channel of contact. Wooden markers were used on many graves in Newfoundland, both in the past and now, and these markers were made by community residents from local wood. The most common type of wooden grave marker is the wooden cross. Typical examples are found in the new cemetery at Witless Bay (photograph 38). These wooden crosses are made from two pieces of board, notched in the center to provide a flush fit. Most wooden crosses, as those from Witless Bay, are painted white. Some contain lettering, usually in black paint, that list the name of the deceased. In some cases, as the cross marking the grave of Anne Carey, the age and date of death are added, or "R I P" or "I H S" may be found. Sometimes objects are added to these wooden crosses. On a marker in the new cemetery at Bay Bulls (photograph 39), a metal crucifix has been nailed to the front of the cross. This crucifix has been painted black, and it may have been carried on top of the coffin during the funeral.⁶⁵ Simple rectangular wooden planks, or varieties cut to resemble a commercially-produced headstone, were also made by local residents to mark a grave. A marker recorded in the cemetery at Bishop's Cove (photograph 40) was made from planks.

⁶⁵For an example of this use of a crucifix see: Ann Hitchcock, "Gods, Graves, and Historical Archaeologists: A Study of Two Papago Cemeteries in Southern Arizona," Arizona Friends of Folklore, AEF Word, 1:2 (1971), pp. 10, 15.



Photograph 38. Wooden crosses used to mark graves, Witless Bay.



Photograph 39. Wooden grave marker with crucifix attached, Bay Bulls.



Photograph 40. Wooden grave marker, Bishop's Cove.

of wood that were cut with a design resembling commercially-produced gravestones.

The use of wooden grave markers in early regions of settlement in North America seems quite common, and in most cases these early markers have disappeared.⁶⁶ A man from Bay Bulls, who is now seventy four, reported that his father told him of seeing row after row of wooden grave markers in a nearby cemetery when he was a boy. These wooden markers resembled the shape of professionally-made headstones. He added that during several severe winters, many of these markers were removed by local residents and used for firewood to heat the houses.⁶⁷

⁶⁶For comments about the use of wooden markers in North America see: Lambert Florin, Tales the Western Tombstones Tell (New York: Boreanza Books, 1967), pp. 87, 90, 103-104, 119, 146, 166-167, 171, 179; Graham, "Headstones," pp. 6-7; Carole Hanks, Early Ontario Gravestones (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1974), pp. 10, 39, 41; Frederick L. Hoffman, Pauper Burials and the Interment of the Dead in Large Cities (Newark, N.J.: Prudential Press, 1919), p. 48; David B. Knight, Cemeteries as Living Landscapes (Ottawa: Ontario Genealogical Society, 1973), p. 19; Brian S. Osborne, "The Cemeteries of the Midland District of Upper Canada: A Note on Mortality in a Frontier Society," Pioneer America, 6:1 (1974), p. 49 and figure 4; R. Adams, "Markers Cut By Hand," American West, 4:3 (1967), pp. 59-64; for examples of various types of wooden markers used in England see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 14 (1947), pp. 229-231; Gover, "Country Churchyards," pp. 228-229; P.H. Ditchfield and Sydney R. Jones, The Charm of the English Village (London: B.T. Batsford, 1908), p. 28.

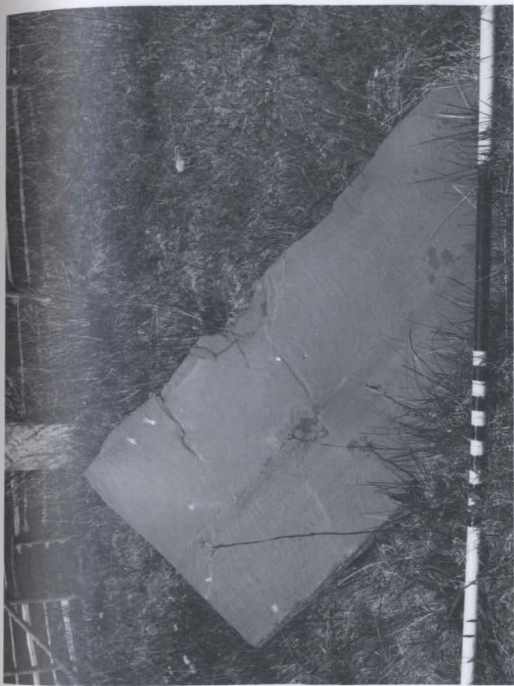
⁶⁷MUNFLA 75-263; for the use of wooden grave markers for fuel in the American west see: Wallis, Stories, p. 46.

Besides these wooden types, graves in Newfoundland were also marked with local stone. These stone markers, again, were chosen by the local resident, and were sometimes decorated. Like the wooden varieties, these stone markers provided local community members with a more viable means of expressing contact with the dead.

Most frequently, stones were selected from the beach or field which were flat and had a somewhat rectangular shape. These stones, without markings, would be placed at the head, or sometimes at both the head and foot of the grave.⁶⁸ Early places of burial in Newfoundland are frequently identified solely by double rows of these rough field stones marking the heads and feet of a series of graves. Many of these stones are quite regular in shape, as a stone in the old cemetery in Witless Bay (photograph 41), but no inscriptions or etchings indicate which grave this stone marks.

The living who placed the stone on the grave most likely were interested not so much in identifying the place of burial for future generations, but in marking the grave

⁶⁸ For the use of simple field stones to mark graves in other parts of North America see: Samuel Adams Drake, Nooks and Corners of the New England Coast (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1875), p. 259; Mitchell B. Garrett, Horse and Buggy Days on Hatchet Creek (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1957), p. 134; Dean Warren Lambert, "Mountain Funerals," Mountain Life and Work, 37 (1961), p. 49; James Watt Raine, Saddlebag Folk: The Way of Life in the Kentucky Mountains (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson, 1942), p. 32.



Photograph 41. Field stone used to mark a grave, Witless Bay.

for their own contact with the dead. The residents who lived with a specific person would know that this stone marked this person's grave, and they would not need an inscription to remind them of the name of the deceased. These stones may indicate that the living were most interested in maintaining contact with community members who were alive in their own lifetime, rather than the dead from previous generations.⁶⁹

Six field stones were recorded that were at least partially carved by local residents.⁷⁰ The living were able to decide the exact form and inscription of the stone, and thus totally control its construction. In most cases, however, these stones were imitations of commercial markers.

A stone at Brigus South (photograph 42) contains merely a cross and what appears to be the initials "E L". This particular stone resembles rough field stones used as grave markers in Ireland,⁷¹ and may have been inscribed in the late eighteenth century. In more elaborate examples,

⁶⁹ For comments about this attitude among the Mormons, and the similar consequences for grave-marking practices see: Ann Hitchcock, "Gods, Graves and Historical Archaeologists: A Study of a Mormon Cemetery in Tucson," Arizona Friends of Folklore, AFF Word, 1:4 (1972), p. 13; also see: Adams, "Markers," p. 61.

⁷⁰ Comments about the use of field stones containing initials or the name and date of death in other parts of North America can be found in: Hanks, Early Ontario, p. 15; Omer L. Hirst, "Bicentennial Ceremony, Dumfries, Virginia," Echoes of History, 4 (1974), p. 55; Jacobs, Stranger Stop-and Cast an Eye, p. 51.

⁷¹ Vincent, In Search, figure 88.



Photograph 42. Field stone grave marker, Brigus South.

which were obviously influenced by commercial markers; the initials or name of the deceased was carved on the stone, as well as the date of death. A stone in the United Church cemetery in Brigus, for example. (photograph 43), has been inscribed along the edges with two parallel lines that provide a border. The initials of the deceased, "E R", are also carved with double lines, apparently to make this portion of the lettering most dominant. What was probably the age at death, "64", was added after the initials, and a line was inscribed under the "E R 64" to separate this information from the date of death "1872." This date was placed within a border. A double line half-way down the length of the stone provides a balance between the two lines of information, the "E R 64" and "1872."

A marker in the Anglican churchyard in Bareneed (photograph 44) again shows signs of influence from commercial headstones. This stone contains the name of the deceased and the date of death. The use of "who died" may have been borrowed from commercial inscriptions which usually had the form, "Sacred to the memory of _____, who died _____." The lack of space on this stone prohibited the use of the first portion of this standard inscription, but the "who died" was retained.

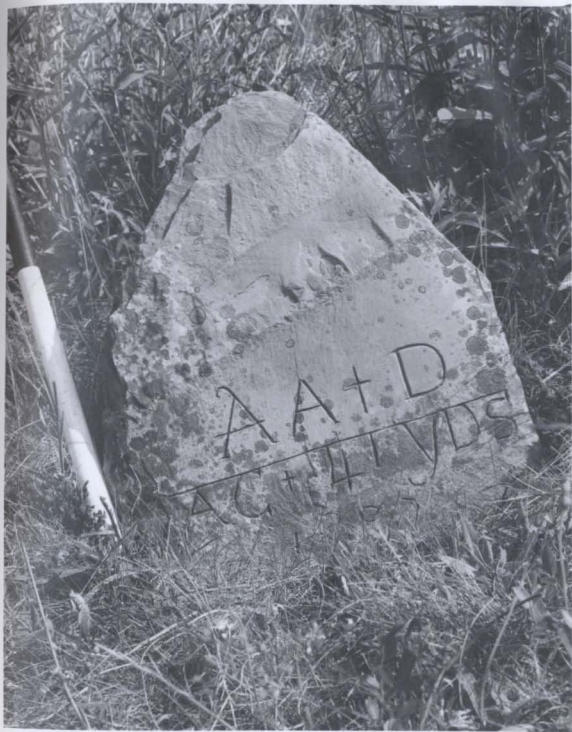
A marker from the old cemetery in Bishop's Cove provides a more simple example of this type of locally-carved stone (photograph 45). This stone was uncut, and utilized



Photograph 43. Field stone grave marker, Brigus.



Photograph 44. Field stone grave marker, Bareneed.



Photograph 45. Field stone grave marker, Bishop's Cove.

the partially rectangular shape of the stone that was probably found in a nearby field. Two "A"s provide the initials of the deceased, and the top of the first letter contains an extended loop. After the initials, a simple cross was inscribed, followed by the letter "D", probably signifying "died" or "dead." A line extends across the stone to separate the first group of letters from the rest of the inscription. This division emphasizes the importance of the fact that "A.A" has died, rather than the age and date at death. The second line of the inscription contains the age at death. "AG" indicates age, followed, again by a small cross, and then "41 YDS", 41 years. The last line contains the date, 1897.

To use local field stone for grave markers in Newfoundland was difficult, since the hardness of the stone prevented an inscription from being easily carved. The lack of trained stone masons, and the knowledge of stone-working generally, would also reduce the opportunity to shape the stone into the desired form. These limitations have brought about the recent use of another material, cement, which permits the local resident to create a marker with the desired shape, and in which he can easily enter an inscription.⁷²

⁷²For the practice of constructing grave markers out of cement in other regions see: Hitchcock, "Gods, Graves and Historical Archaeologists: A Study of a Mormon Cemetery," pp. 12-13 and photographs; Sara Clark, "The Decoration of Graves in Central Texas with Seashells," in Wilson M. Hudson, ed., Diamond Bessie and the Shepherds, Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, No. 36 (Austin: Encino Press, 1972),

Wooden forms are constructed that contain a cavity with the shape of the desired grave marker. Cement is poured into this cavity, and when the marker has partially hardened, the frame is removed. An inscription is then entered into the partially hardened cement, either by simply tracing letters with a pointed instrument, or by pressing precut letters and designs made from wood or leather into the cement. After the cement has dried, these templates are removed, leaving the inscription or design.

A marker from the old cemetery in Bishop's Cove (photograph 46) was constructed of cement using this method. This marker, remarkably shaped, was inscribed with a pointed object before the cement had hardened. The use of "in" before the month indicates a concentration on the month, and the addition of the day of death may have been an afterthought.

A marker from the general Protestant cemetery in St. John's (photograph 47) indicates how elaborate markers can be constructed using this process. This marker, dated 1917, closely resembles the obelisk style of white marble which was popular in the late nineteenth century, and an example of this type can be seen in the background and to the left of the cement marker in the photograph. The design on this

p. 39; Clifton Johnson, Highways and Byways from the St. Lawrence to Virginia, Including the States of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, New York, Virginia and the District of Columbia (New York and London: Macmillan Co., 1913), p. 226; Adams, "Markers," pp. 62-64.



Photograph 46. Cement grave marker, Bishop's Cove.



Photograph 47. Cement grave marker, general Protestant cemetery, St. John's.

cement marker is quite elaborate, and most likely was made by a combination of digging with pointed objects and the pressing of templates into the partially-hardened cement. The inscribed arrows at the top of the monument are quite uniform in design, and were probably made from a template. The designs at the base of the obelisk were probably made by removing portions of the wet cement. This marker, though most likely made by a relative of the deceased, was clearly influenced in design by commercial gravestones.

The construction and use of a grave marker could enable the living to express their continued contact with the dead. This marker can visually indicate the presence of the dead, and the actual act of construction enables the living to show the extent of their desire to maintain contact with the dead. In Newfoundland, however, the grave marker has rarely been able to adequately express this desire of the living.

To summarize, the use of grave markers in the British Isles developed initially from the desire of the rising middle classes to express their financial success in life by marking their grave in death. In Newfoundland, too, early grave markers, especially gravestones, were a sign of economic success in life. The arrival of local churches also increased the use of gravestones in Newfoundland, with local clergymen stressing the need to mark each burial with some type of permanent religious marker.

A local stone carving tradition did not develop in Newfoundland, and gravestones were initially carved in the West Country and Ireland and shipped to the island. When the stone carving trade shifted to St. John's in the early nineteenth century, local markers were still designed by people outside the community, now craftsmen in St. John's. Two abrupt stylistic changes that occurred in the early nineteenth century in St. John's gravestone design apparently met with little opposition, and the St. John's stone carvers were able to dictate the type of marker that would be used in local communities.

Only in isolated instances did local residents actually construct a grave marker for relatives. Wooden markers were made and field stones were also used. Recently, markers of cement have been constructed, but all these types have been influenced by commercial gravestone designs.

The use of a grave marker in Newfoundland became a mere formality, controlled throughout its past history by external guidelines. Unlike the grave decorating traditions, the construction of a grave marker is not greatly influenced by local traditions, and the living have little or no role to play in its construction. Thus, the viability of this channel of expression of contact of the living with the dead has never been great. The information that was placed on the actual surface of the grave marker could also provide a means of expressing this contact, specifically through the

creation of a particular symbol, epitaph or lettering style.
This final level of contact will be discussed next.

CHAPTER IX

SYMBOL, LETTERING, EPITAPH

The construction of a grave marker involved the actual creation of an object of a specific form that could be placed on a grave. Besides this act of creation, the shape of that object, and the inscription and decoration which would be placed on its surface had to be determined. This creation of specific symbols, epitaphs, and spatial arrangement of lettering could permit the living to express their desire to maintain contact with the dead. Through the composition of a specific epitaph, for example, the living could describe in writing their grief at the loss of a family member or praise his/her past life. This written expression would be placed over the dead, constantly expressing these sentiments to the deceased. The living could also proclaim their belief that the deceased was now in heaven, implicitly stating their hope that the dead would not return to trouble them. The creation of specific symbols could also express the grief of the living, or their belief in the future resurrection of the dead.

The designs and lettering which were placed on the grave marker could provide a channel of contact of the living with the dead. In the markers used in Newfoundland, however, the information placed on them was rarely created

by local residents. Instead, clergymen and stone masons frequently owned printed materials which contained patterns for grave marker designs, especially gravestones.

This chapter will examine the specific patterns that were inscribed on the surface of gravestones recorded during the Newfoundland field work, as well as the shapes of these gravestones. The outline of the top of the gravestone will be discussed first, followed by the symbols contained in the tympanum. The lettering styles used for the inscription will be described, as well as the actual forms of this written information. This survey will focus on the sources for these various surface features, pointing out that in most cases their content was determined by printed sources, rather than through the choice of local residents. The early gravestones carved in the British Isles, and also those carved by St. John's craftsmen will be discussed, since the printed sources used initially in England and Ireland were later used by Newfoundland stone carvers. This almost total reliance on a large body of printed sources standardized this aspect of the gravestone and permitted little expression of individual contact of the living with the dead.

When a slab of stone was purchased from a quarry by the gravestone carvers, it usually was rectangular in shape. The first decision that had to be made when producing a headstone was whether the stone would be left rectangular, or whether the top would be shaped according to a particular

outline. Most Newfoundland headstones were carved at the top to produce a specific shape.

Figure 7 contains the major headstone shapes that were recorded in Newfoundland. Headstones were usually placed with the longer dimension perpendicular to the grave. The depth of most headstones does not exceed six inches, the height rarely four feet, and the width three feet. Style one depicted in Figure 7 contains the most basic form, a simple rectangular slab. This type of marker is related in form to the recumbent slab; in fact, a headstone at Port Kirwan was carved as a recumbent slab and placed upright as a headstone when used. Style two contains a semi-circle on top, with the corners rounded. Style three consists of a pointed top, which is closely related to the rounded variety of style two. Style four also contains a semi-circular top, but the circle does not extend across the entire horizontal surface of the stone. Instead, on either side of the semi-circle are indentations which form two small circles. Style five is related to the previous form; however, between the middle circle and the two outer indentations are short horizontal cuts. This particular form is one of the most common in Newfoundland. Style six is a derivation of style four. The large semi-circle in the middle of the stone has been indented to form two smaller circles. Finally, style seven derives from styles four and six. Two indentations on the top produce three small circles plus two circular

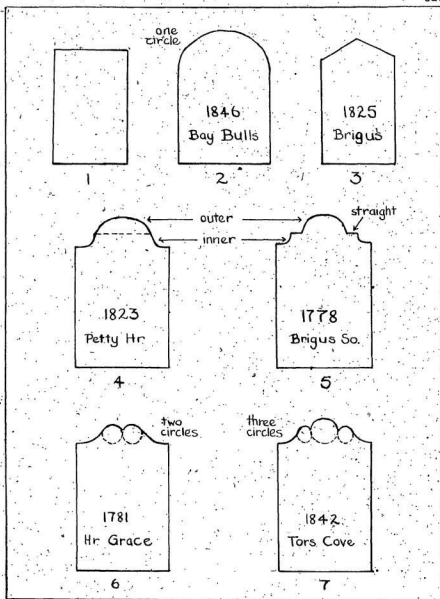


Figure 7. Headstone shapes recorded in Newfoundland.

indentations on the edges.¹

The shape of the top of a headstone was most likely determined by the preference of the stone mason and by the specific stone that was to be shaped. Many stones that were used for grave markers were not perfectly squared when purchased, and faults in the edge of the stone often dictated the final form that the stone would take. Many headstone forms could have originated from the production of a design that eliminated these faults. Writing about English headstones, Herbert pointed out that:

The adoption of shaped tops may possibly have arisen quite accidentally through blemishes being discovered during manufacture at one or both of the upper angles; conceivably by cutting away a defective angle and adopting a curve a slab was produced having larger finished height than if a rectangular outline had been insisted upon. In any case since the slabs as quarried were irregular a shaped top would almost always avoid waste.²

The outline of a headstone may have been consciously carved to follow a specific shape, but more frequently, faults in the quarried stone seem to have determined this shape.

In the West, death has frequently been connected with a specific iconography, and a series of symbols has always

¹For a discussion of headstone outlines in England see: Frederick Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," Monumental Journal, 12 (1945), p. 49; Albert Herbert, "Swithland Slate Headstones," Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, Transactions, 22 (1941-1945), pp. 217-218 and figure 1; A. Needham, "Old English Headstones," Monumental Journal, 20 (1953), pp. 448-449.

²Herbert, "Swithland," p. 217.

been associated with death since early Christian times. When Church leaders were buried within a church, their tombs were usually marked with some type of religious symbol, indicating their mortality, or future state of existence.³ When headstones began to be used in the late 1600's, the cutting of a shaped border produced a tympanum to which this iconography logically could be transferred.

The design of a symbol by the living could enable them to express visually their desire for continuing contact with the dead. On Newfoundland headstones, however, symbols were usually chosen by the gravestone carver, with little consultation from the family. These designs which were carved in the tympanum of the stone, have usually been taken directly either from printed sources, or from models to which the carver has had access, and local residents could rarely determine these designs. A discussion of these various sources for gravestone symbols will point out the external control of this aspect of the gravestone, and how little it reflected the local culture.

Masons who carved the earliest Newfoundland gravestones worked in the West Country or in southeast Ireland,

³For a survey of this iconography of death used on burial markers from early Christian times see: Erwin Panofsky, Tomb Scripture: Four Lectures on Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., ca. 1957); Adolphe Napoleon Didron, Christian Iconography: The History of Christian Art in the Middle Ages, trans. E.J. Millington (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1965), II, 153-173.

and therefore used the printed sources for gravestone symbols that were common in most regions of the British Isles. The earliest of these printed sources was most likely the broadside. Because of their ephemeral nature, it is difficult to trace the design found on one Newfoundland gravestone to specific broadsides printed in England or Ireland. Their use appears certain, however, and one type was particularly used--the funeral elegy.

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries throughout the British Isles, versed elegies were composed for most funerals and then printed on broadsides. These broadsides, containing both verse and illustrations, were distributed at the funeral among mourners, and were sometimes thrown into the grave. The design of these broadsides frequently resembled the actual shape of a headstone, with a tympanum containing a design at the top (figures 8 and 9). As on the headstone, the lines of the elegy would appear under the tympanum, and the broadside would be signed by the printer at the bottom, just as the headstone was signed by the carver. In their work on the New England stone carving tradition, the Tashjians recognized the close connection between early gravestone designs and these broadsides, pointing out that:

. . . it is the broadsides of elegiac verse pinned to the shrouded hearse on the way to the graveyard that indicate, by their close juxtaposition of verbal and visual elements, how gravestone art was animated . . . the broadside presented visual



AN ELEGY

On the DEATH of that Eminent Minister of the Gospel,

Mr. GEORGE COKAYN,

Who exchanged this Mortal for an Immortal Life, the 21st of November, 1691.

24. Nov. 1691

WHAT more breaches! is Cokay dead?
Who was so desirous the Gospel I should be spread.
That he might gain Souls that were remote,
And to build up those that were already call'd,
I that he might finish his Ministerial Work to all,
Whose heart was still ingross'd in Pastoral Care,
That he fill the Flock of C. he might feed here,
In which the Lord had made him Over-see:
Studying with great pain upon his Bed with care,
That he might still be brought on Sabbath in his Chair,
Praying to God that he might still hold out,
Till he had by his Providence found out
One that *Jesus* had promised to send in need,
His People with knowledge and understanding feed.
The Lord was pleas'd to grant him his desire,
That all his Church in one mind was in fire
In fixing their eye whom Providence found out in all,
They fix'd on *Nathan*, and give him a Gospel-call,
Which hath proved himself a Gospel-preached to all.
A Workman that needs not be assist'd to none,
Preaching forth Free Grace in Christ to all that come,
Following him who was his Patron, but now is high
Above the reach of all his Enemy.
Whereby his Soul doth reap the fruit of all,
While we are still labouring in Sin's Thrall
In bondage where *Satan* would destroy us all.
The very *Lord* if possibly he might
But Christ have paid that he might give them fight.
Whereby he hath rescued them out of *Satan's* Gen,
Wherein they were caught by *Adam's* Sin.
But by Free Grace they were reliev'd,
And by the Imposted Righteousness of Christ reliev'd,
And by that like precious Faith was found;
Which was by our dear Pastor found.
That though the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ,
Grace and Peace should be multiply'd to the highest.
To all those that were looking high
For the light of His Countenance to keep them by.
And that it is a censure strain in those
Who are crying for any worldly good to oppose.
Cokay he would divide the Word aright,
Preaching the Gospel with all his might.
And that Christ would come as a Thief in Night
To those that are found his Enemies in delight,
They would be found naked, and their shame appear,
When Confidence will be a weak'd with greater fear.
Still he was harping on that strain,
That Sinners might be brought to God by Christ again.

He was always mindful of the Churches poor,
And not unmindful to others in Distress more.
Constantly he was mindful of Church-Order, there
According to what the Scriptures made appear,
And not to keep that in his own Power alone,
Which does belong to more than one.
Which does rely in the whole Church, that those
Which are Enemies to Gospel-Order might be oppos'd.
And that all might agree, as Members not dead,
Of that Mystical Body, whom Christ is the only Head.
It is to be lamented in Elegy this day;
That there be so many of those that have away.
The Lord grant those that stay behind,
To mind their Duty, as in the Word they find.
Power in Heaven and Earth was given to Christ alone,
That all the Father had given to him, might be brought
We are but Strangers and Pilgrims here. (home)
Where no continuing City does appear;
But we must seek for one that is to come; —
And that in might be our constant care
To walk amongst the Tombs while we are here;
That Death might not be a surprise to none,
That we might be hastening to our home.
Endavouring to mortify the deeds of the Flesh while here,
That Sin which is the sting of Death might not appear;
That by free Grace in Christ alone, I tell:
By faith you may walk through the Vail
Of the *Shadow of Death*, and fear no ill.
When this *Mortal* put on *Immortality*,
We shall be blest to all Eternity;
And enjoy that Region which is above,
Where blessed Souls are still in love;
Where there is no Sorrow, nor Grief found at all,
But all with one accord ever agree shall,
Singing the praises of God with *Melchizedek*.
But you that stay behind in this lower Region still;
Be not dejected, it is our heavenly Fathers will:
Who knows best what his Churches need
Who hath, and will feed Pastors them to feed.
According to his promise abiding faithful still,
Thou our poor staggering Faithless spirit to feed,
He is the same yesterday, to day, for ever;
To subvert all those that do endeavour
To oppose his Church which shall abide with him for ever.

This Eminent Minister will be Inter'd on Friday the 27th
of the Instant November, 1691. from St. King-Win-
vers-Hall in Red-Cloth-Street. 22. 9. 49

LONDON: Printed, and are to be Sold by Richard Birkbein near the Oxford Arms-Inn, Warwick-Lane, 1691.

AN ELEGY,

On the Death of

Sir William Turner, Knight,

AND

Alderman of the City of LONDON, and President of Bridwell and Bebblesh Hospitals,
WHO

Departed this Life on *Thursday*, the 9th. of *February*, about a Eleven of the Clock in the
Forenoon, 1697.

Come, come, prepare to Weep, our Sorrow's great,
For we have lost our Worthiest Magistrate,
Sir William Turner, Father of our Tray,
The City's Darling and the Orphans Joy.
Oh! who can Name him and forbear to Weep,
Since his *Just Soul*, does with his Fathers sleep.
For thee, O LONDON, I am sorry too;
Methinks I hear thee Cry: *Alas! Thy Adieu,*
Adieu! Adieu! Alas! Death! what dost thou mean,
To take the Pillar on which I did lean?
I once from Ruins lifted up my Head,
But now, Alas! Alas! Great TURNER'S Dead.
So Wise, so Just, and Equal too was He,
He Punish'd Guilty, and set Guiltless Free;
So Charitable, that though he is Dead,
His Works of Charity Live in his stead.
An Hospital he lately did Erect,
The Hungry Christians to Feed and Protect;
Besides a Chappel, wherein twice a Day,
A Minister is ordered to Pray;
Wherein, full Forty Poor, he doth Maintain,
Oh! that our Sighs could him recall again!
So well Belov'd was he, that he was sent
Our Grievance to Redress in Parliament,
Where he behav'd himself so Just and Wise,
His Death, draws Tears from every Readers Eyes.
He's Dead alas! who strove with all his might
To restore the Widows and Orphans to their Right.

Weep, weep, therefore, let outward Sorrows show
Your inward Griefs, with Tears your Checks bedew,
For him who while he did with us remain,
Wrong'd not his Conscience for Lucie of Gain;
From base Deceit and Guile was always free,
And th' great Assurer o' th' City's Liberty.
But ah, bold Death, spare neither Great nor Small,
All fare alike, the Shrubs and Cedars Tall:
What shall we say, he Mortal was, though Brave,
And as all Mortals, Subject to the Grave,
But why should we thus Grieve? when he, I'm sure,
In everlasting Mansions is secure;
And with the Bless'd doth *Hallelujah* sing,
To our Great Creator and Eternal King.
But since he's dead and gone, we'll let him Rest,
Until the Resurrection of the Just.

EPITAPH

HERE LIES INTER'D, under this Stone,
A worthy Magistrate, well known,
Lord-Mayor of LONDON, in Sixty Nine,
And one who led a Life Divine;
Sir William Turner was his Name,
Whom no one Living I hear blame;
A True Son of the English Church;
Whose Name is storied in this Urn;
Whom while he lived on this Stage,
Made Bridwell's poor thursty Gage,
Then rest, dear Father, in thy Urn,
Till the Earth Creaks and Borne.

London, Printed for George Crown, at the Blue-Blind in Thavet
Street, over against Bayard's-Coffin.

Figure 9. Broadside elegy.

images alongside the verbal figures in the elegy itself, all of which were presented in a manner that paralleled the vitality of gravestone art.⁴

Gravestone carvers could obtain these broadsides at local funerals and keep a collection of them for use in the future design of headstones. A portion of the illustration on the broadside could be adapted to fit within the tympanum of a particular headstone. The actual shape of the elegy could also be used as a model for cutting a headstone a particular shape.

Designs for early Newfoundland gravestones that were carved in England and Ireland were also taken from ephemeral literature connected with the churches, and again, local

⁴Dickran and Ann Tashjian, Memorials for Children of Change: The Art of Early New England Stonecarving (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1974), pp. 44-45; for a discussion of the funeral elegy and its development in the Old and New World see: John W. Draper, The Funeral Elegy and the Rise of English Romanticism (New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1967); for a facsimile collection of broadside elegies see: John W. Draper, A Century of Broadside Elegies: Being Ninety English and Ten Scotch Broad-sides Illustrating Biography and Manners of the Seventeenth Century (London: Ingpen and Grant, 1928); Ola Elizabeth Winslow, American Broadside Verse from Imprints of the 17th & 18th Centuries (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), pp. 1-61; for comments about their use in New England see: Alice Morse Earle, Customs and Fashions in Old New England (London: David Nutt, 1893), p. 365; for a discussion of the influence of these elegies on oral materials see: Robert D. Bethke, "Narrative Obituary Verse and Native American Balladry," Journal of American Folklore, 83 (1970), pp. 61-68; Tristram P. Coffin, "On a Peak in Massachusetts: The Literary and Aesthetic Approach," in Mody C. Boatright, Wilson M. Hudson, and Allen Maxwell, eds., A Good Tale and a Bonnie Tune, Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, No. 32 (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1964), pp. 201-209.

residents in Newfoundland had no control over these symbols and designs. The Roman Catholic church has supervised the printing of "holy cards," small printed cards containing prayers on one side and a visual image on the other. The age of this tradition has apparently not been studied, but such cards may have been used as models for gravestone carvers, especially those in Ireland.⁵ An example of a "holy card" printed in Quebec in the late nineteenth century is shown in figure 10. The visual design on the first page is quite simple, and such designs could conceivably have been used by stone carvers in England or Ireland for the stones shipped to Newfoundland, and even St. John's carvers could later have used this source. It is likely that some similar type of visual source was used for Irish gravestones, and these could have been used in Newfoundland. Writing about the sources for the designs of eighteenth century Irish gravestones, Longfield commented that:

... so far no source or sources have been found to which they [the designs] can be attributed with any degree of satisfaction. That they should have originated from illustrations in contemporary Mass and religious books would seem an obvious solution - were it not that little decoration of similar quality has yet been discovered in such books. . . . But much of the religious literature of penal times has

⁵For an example of the influence of commercially-produced images on a local art see: Yvonne Lange, "Lithography, an Agent of Technological Change in Religious Folk Art: A Thesis," Western Folklore, 33 (1974), pp. 51-64.

Qu'enfin son admirable Mère
Fut l'objet de mon tendre amour,
Que par Elle mon cœur espère
Entrer au céleste séjour.

Puis tu détacheras mon âme
Pour l'unir au Cœur de Jésus,
Au sein de l'éternelle flamme
Où règne le Dieu des vertus.



PRIERE

Au bon Ange.

Alors qu'au matin de ma vie
Dieu te donna pour protecteur,
A mon enfance irréfléchie,
Bon Ange, tu ravis mon cœur.

Me prenant des bras de ma mère,
Tu me berças avec amour,
Quand tout le reste de la terre
Méprisait cette enfant d'un jour.

Depuis, ta bonté tutélaire
Voilà sur chacun de mes pas;
Tu me guidas dans la carrière,
Me prêtant l'appui de ton bras.

Que de fautes j'aurais commises,
Sans ton charitable conseil!
Que de dangers, que de surprises,
Où ta voix me donna l'éveil!

J'ai vécu!... les ans sur ma tête
Ont passé, comme passé un jour.
La mort approche... et suis-je prêt
A partir, quand viendra mon tour?

Qui sait? à mon heure dernière,
Peut-être mon cœur languissant
N'aura pas même une prière
A murmurer au Tout-Puissant.

Peut-être ma langue muette
Ne saura plus se délier;
Et mon âme triste et inquiète
Tremblera, sans pouvoir perler.

A ce moment si redoutable,
Que j'envisage avec effroi;
Toujours bon, toujours secourable,
O cher Ange, parle pour moi.

Dis à mon Sauveur que je l'aime
Plus qu'à nous objet ici-bas,
L'ar-deux tout et pour lui-même...
Que je veux mourir dans ses bras.

Dis-lui que de sa main divine
Sous regret j'accepte la mort;
Et que tout mon être s'incline
Sous l'arrêt qui fixe mon sort.

Qu'en fille de la sainte Eglise,
J'ai souhaité vivre et mourir;
Que je veux lui rester soumise,
En tout jusqu'au dernier soupir.

Dis-lui que si je lui fus complice,
Chaque sainte me fit génie;
Et que de son sang adorable,
Je crois qu'il daigna les couvrir.

Figure 10. Nineteenth century "holy card" printed in Québec.

undoubtedly perished⁶

In a later article, Longfield discussed the prevalence of small pictures containing scenes from the Bible that were hung in the house over the fireplace. These paintings, too, may have influenced the visual designs of the gravestone.⁷

Patterns for gravestones carved in England and Ireland and shipped to Newfoundland could also have been adapted from visual objects found on a local church building. With the Puritan Revolution, many paintings, statues and other visual images found in the interior and exterior of churches in England were destroyed, and the penal laws in Ireland closed many churches.⁸ In spite of these occurrences, some features of the church edifice were left unaltered, and these could have provided models for gravestone designs. On the exterior of the Anglican church in Powerstock, Dorset, for example, a small cluster of angels' heads is found near the doorway. Such figures could have

⁶ Ada K. Longfield, "Some 18th Century Irish Tombstones: 1: Introduction and Dennis Cullen of Monaseed," Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Journal, 73, part 2 (1943), pp. 31-32; also see: Ada Leask, "Folk Art in Irish Cemetery Monuments," Monumental Journal, 30 (1963), p. 42.

⁷ Ada K. Longfield, "Some 18th Century Irish Tombstones (Contd.) IV. J. Butler, Hugh Rogan, David Doyle, etc.," Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Journal 76 (1946), p. 81.

⁸ For a discussion of the effects of the penal laws on religious practice in Ireland see: Maureen Wall, The Penal Laws, 1691-1760, Irish History Series, No. 1 (Dundalk: Dublin Historical Association, 1967).

provided a model for the cherubs that were carved on local headstones, and the English stones found in Newfoundland containing cherubs could have been copied from such a model.

Gravestone designs were also borrowed by stone masons, both in the British Isles and in Newfoundland, from visual images within the church. Weekly attendance at church services could fix images in the mind of the carver, and he would later draw these in his workshop. Designs found on tombs within the church, paintings, stained glass windows, etc., could all be modified to produce a simple image that would be carved on the tympanum of a gravestone.

In Ireland, for example, many of the gravestones carved in the Waterford-Wexford area during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contained what was known as the "Heraldry of Christ" or the "Instruments of the Passion" in the tympanum. This design contained the physical objects connected with the crucifixion of Christ that are mentioned in the Gospels. These symbols were frequently found on the large altar tombs and recumbent slabs within churches used during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most likely these altar tombs could provide the source for the design of these gravestones.⁹

A headstone in Port Kirwan (photograph 48), dated 1769, provides an example of a stone that was carved in

⁹ See: Ada K. Longfield, Some Irish Churchyard Sculpture (Ballycotton, Co. Cork: Gifford & Craven, 1974), pp. 3-4.



Photograph 48. Elinor Brothers stone, dated October 27, 1769, located in Port Kirwan. This stone which contains the instruments of the passion was carved in Ireland.

Ireland which contained the instruments of the passion in the tympanum. This stone contains a cross in the center, and behind this cross is a ladder, lance, and rod with hyssop. To the right of the cross are a hammer, tongs, and nails, and to the left are a pillar, whip and dice.¹⁰

A stone carved by the St. John's mason, Edward Rice, which is located in Harbour Grace, indicates a direct connection with the Irish use of this symbol (photograph 49). This headstone, dated 1850, also contains many of the instruments of the passion. A cross is again located in the central portion of the tympanum. To the left of the cross is the ladder and a portion of the thirty pieces of silver; to the right is the lance and reed with hyssop, as well as the cloak. Beneath the cross are a cock, three dice, hammer, and probably a vinegar vat. Rice's use of this symbol indicates his direct contact with the Irish carving

¹⁰ For a complete list of all the instruments of the passion see: LeRoy H. Appleton and Stephen Bridges, Symbolism in Liturgical Art (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), pp. 49-50; for Irish examples of this motif see: Longfield, Some Irish Churchyard Sculpture, pp. 3-4 and Plate 2; Ada K. Longfield, "A Decorated Eighteenth Century Headstone at Killashee, County Kildare," County Kildare Archaeological Society, Journal, 13 (1946-61), pp. 133-134; Ada K. Longfield, "An Eighteenth Century Headstone at Kildangan, County Kildare," County Kildare Archaeological Society, Journal, 13 (1946-61), pp. 225-227; Ada Leask, "Some Folk Art in Irish Graveyards," Monumental Journal, 28 (1961), pp. 72-78; for examples of this design in England see: Frederick Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials (London: Lutterworth Press, 1963), p. 188 and Plate 25; Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 13 (1946), pp. 371-376; 15 (1948), pp. 655-659.



Photograph 49. Detail of a stone located in Harbour Grace carved by the St. John's mason, Edward Rice. This headstone contains the instruments of the passion in the tympanum.

tradition. He may have migrated to Newfoundland from Ireland, or he may have learned his stone carving trade there. In any case, both of these stones derive their design from older table tombs found in Ireland, and not from the dictates of local Newfoundland residents who purchased them.

A headstone in Harbour Grace (photograph 50) provides an example of a design that was most likely borrowed from either a painting inside a church, or some type of printed illustration. This stone had fallen over and much of the detail of its carving had worn away. The scene in the tympanum, however, was still visible, and depicted Jesus being taken down from the cross. The Mannerist lines of the scene suggest not only that a skilled craftsman carved this design, but also that the scene was copied from a painting or drawing. Again, it is unlikely that this design was composed or selected by local residents.

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with an increase in literacy and printing, various kinds of books began to appear in England which would influence the symbols used on gravestones, and many of the early Newfoundland stones exhibit this influence.¹¹ Books containing

¹¹ The most elaborately illustrated books which influenced stone carvers throughout the British Isles during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were apparently not used by craftsmen who produced stones that are found in Newfoundland. The most widely used of these books in England was Quarles' Emblems; for an edition that was



Photograph 50. Gravestone in Harbour Grace which contains the scene of Christ being taken down from the cross in the tympanum.

architectural designs, as well as handbooks for furniture makers were purchased by stone carvers who converted many of these designs into decorative motifs for headstone.¹²

Architectural pattern books frequently contained sections of mural designs for use within a church. Many of these were used by craftsmen in England to design headstones. Battey Langley's Builder's and Workman's Treasury, for example, appeared in 1750, and contained a section on mural designs (figure 11).¹³ Gravestone carvers could

published in the West Country see: Francis Quarles, Emblems Divine and Moral, together with Hieroglyphics of the Life of Man (Bristol: Joseph Landsdown and John Mills, 1808); for discussions of the use of this book in England by carvers see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 15 (1948), pp. 471-476; "Christian and Mortality Symbols on Eighteenth Century Monuments," Monumental Journal, 29 (1962), pp. 242-245.

¹²For a discussion of the effects of these pattern books on architecture in New England see: Antoinette Forrester Downing, Early Homes of Rhode Island (Richmond, Va.: Garrett and Massie, 1937); Fiske Kimball, "Colonial Amateurs and their Models: Peter Harrison," Architecture, 53:6 (June, 1926), pp. 155-160; 54:1 (July, 1926), pp. 185-190, 209.

¹³Battey Langley, The City and Country Builder's and Workman's Treasury of Designs: or the Art of Drawing and Working the Ornamental Parts of Architecture, Illustrated by Upwards of Four Hundred Grand Designs, Neatly Engraved on One Hundred and Eighty-Six Copper-Plates, for Piers, Gates, Doors, Windows, Niches, Buffets, Cisterns, Chimney-Pieces, Tabernacle Frames, Pavements, Frets, Gulochi's, Pulpits, Types, Altar Pieces, Monuments, Fonts, Obeliskes, Pedestals for Sun-Dials, Busto's, and Stone Tables, Book-Cases, Ceilings, and Iron Works, Proportioned by Aliquot Parts, with an Appendix of Fourteen Plates of Trusses for Girders and Beams, Different Sorts of Rafter, and a Variety of Roofs, &c., to which Are Prefix'd, the Five Orders of Columnus, According to Andrea Palladio, whose

Tables for Monumental Inscriptions

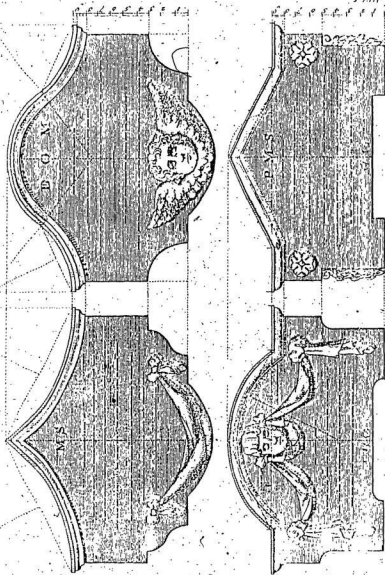


Figure 11. Mural designs from Langley's Builder's and Workman's Treasury.

easily alter the cherub motif for use as a symbol on grave-stones, such as a stone that was recorded in Harbour Grace and made in England (photograph 51). Gibbs' architectural guide¹⁴ contained several designs of mural monuments, many with an urn motif. The design of a stone in Port Kirwan (photograph 52) resembles drawings found in many architectural guides, and was copied from a book similar to Gibbs'.

Furniture guides, while rarely containing overall designs that could be modified for use on an entire grave-stone, frequently contained decorative motifs which could be used for portions of a design. A pattern book by Robert and James Adam was used widely by furniture makers, and was soon borrowed by stone carvers.¹⁵ The Adams' book

Members Are Proportioned by Aliquot Parts, in a More Easy Manner than Has Yet Been Done, the Whole Interspersed with Sure Rules for Working All the Varieties of Raking Members in Pediments, Modillions, &c., the Like, for the Immediate Use of Workmen, Never Published Before, in Any Language (London: S. Harding, 1750), plate 119.

¹⁴ James Gibbs, A Book of Architecture, Containing Designs of Buildings and Ornaments (London: author, 1728).

¹⁵ Robert and James Adam, The Decorative Work of Robert and James Adam, Being a Reproduction of the Plates Illustrating Decoration and Furniture from their "Works in Architecture" Published 1778-1812 (London: B.T. Batsford, 1900), plate 7; for comments about the use of Adams' books by stone carvers see: J.E.H. Blake, "Gravestones in Midland Churchyards," Birmingham Archaeological Society, Transactions, 51 (1925-26), p. 14; for another influential pattern book see: Thomas Chippendale, The Ornamental Designs of Chippendale: From the Gentleman and Cabinet-Makers Director, 1762 (London: Alec Tiranti Ltd., 1949).



Photograph 51. Harbour Grace stone containing cherubs in the tympanum.



Photograph 52. Port Kirwan stone containing an urn motif.

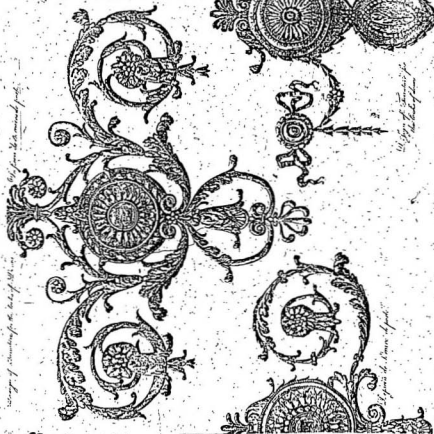
contained sections of designs for the decorative carving of furniture (figure 12). A headstone in Baigus (photograph 53) contains a design in the tympanum which does not symmetrically fit the outline of the marker. When this design is compared with the motif in Adams' book, it becomes apparent that the carver borrowed the design from a similar pattern book. The decorative motifs found on a stone in Harbour Grace that was probably carved in Bristol (photograph 54) may have also been copied from a furniture designer's pattern book.

As gravestone carvers established an ongoing business, both in the British Isles and in St. John's, it is likely that they entered many of their gravestone designs into master books which could be copied whenever a stone, containing a particular design needed to be carved. None of these books were located in the British Isles or in St. John's, owing partly to their ephemeral nature. As Burgess noted:

Working drawings and designs were kept and handed down in the family, and masons presumably compiled their own pattern-books, although, as these were usually thumbed to pieces through continual use, existing specimens are virtually unknown.¹⁶

¹⁶Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, p. 55; for an example of decorative drawing found in a gravestone carver's notebook see: Tashjian, Memorials for Children, p. 216; for comments about stone carvers passing on these notebooks see: Katharine A. Esdaile, English Church Monuments, 1510 to 1840 (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1946), pp. 80-81.

Small - Metal - Chandelier - No. 10.
Fig. 12. - Chandelier - No. 10.



Design of Chandelier for the Table of No. 10.

Design of Chandelier for the Table of No. 10.

Design of Chandelier for the Table of No. 10.

Design of Chandelier for the Table of No. 10.

Design of Chandelier for the Table of No. 10.

Figure 12. Designs from the Adams' furniture pattern book.



Photograph 53. Design of a gravestone in Brigus most likely copied from a furniture pattern book.



Photograph 54. Decorative work on a stone in Harbour Grace probably carved by the Bristol mason, Golledge.

Up until the mid-nineteenth century, the decorative symbols that were to be used on a gravestone in Newfoundland were chosen by the stone carver, either those working in the British Isles, or in Newfoundland. Craftsmen usually obtained these designs from a wide variety of printed sources, such as broadsides, architectural guide books and religious literature, as well as models they saw around them.

In the mid-nineteenth century, however, church leaders in England became disturbed at the symbols and designs used by local stone carvers. Many clergymen, aware of what they felt was the "pagan" origin of many symbols, called for the use of Christian designs and symbols on grave markers. One clergyman, writing in 1851, clearly outlined the type of designs which were not to be used on gravestones:

1. Those of a Pagan character - as urns; broken columns; pyramids; funereal and inverted torches; Cupids weeping or blowing trumpets; branches of cypress, &c. - which were all emblems of Pagan superstitions, or copied from Pagan sculpture.
2. Those of a Popish character - as representations of Romish saints; emblematic allusions to Romish legends and doctrines; representations of the incomprehensible Trinity; the Virgin Mary crowned as Queen of Heaven, or represented as nursing our Lord, still an infant under her control; grotesque and hideous creatures, compounded of man and beast; dragons, griffins, fabulous serpents, &c. - these all originated in Popery, and should be carefully excluded from Christian memorials.
3. Emblems of perishing mortality - as skeletons; emaciated bodies; skulls; crossbones, bleeding hearts; coffins, &c. The representation of a coffin, whether designed as an accessory, or

constituting the entire monument, equally comes within this class of objectionable emblems. The mock stone coffins, recently introduced as churchyard monuments, are not only repulsive to the sight, but seem designed to revive the Romish errors which first caused the receptacles of the dead to be placed above ground. These emblems of perishing mortality are objectionable, not only as repulsive objects, but as excluding all recognition of the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul.¹⁷

Church leaders in England called for a complete change in the symbols that had been used by carvers on gravestones, and they insured this change by supervising the publication of books containing approved patterns for gravestones.

Pattern books, which began to appear in the mid-nineteenth century, were the first printed guides devoted exclusively to gravestones that were used by carvers. Before their appearance, carvers relied on a wide variety of printed sources, but now complete designs could be found in one book. These guides were printed on cheap, poor-quality paper, usually with only paper covers, and no longer than twenty pages in length. These commercial pattern books received a wide distribution throughout England because of church support, and some of them may have been purchased by

¹⁷ William H. Kelke, The Churchyard Manual: Intended Chiefly for Rural Districts, with Designs for Churchyard Memorials, Kindly Furnished by G.G. Scott and W. Slater, Architects (London: C. Cox, 1851), pp. 33-34; for discussions of this campaign by the churches to control gravestone designs see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 18 (1951), pp. 239-242; Frederick Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments: Fashion and Style in Sepulchral Monuments," Monumental Journal, 19 (1952), pp. 101-103; Frederick Burgess, "Thou Shalt Not: Restrictions on Memorials a Century Ago," Monumental Journal, 22 (1955), pp. 449-454; 22 (1955), pp. 507-513.

St. John's carvers: The influence of these books on some of the gravestones recorded in Newfoundland seems certain, however, regardless of whether these stones were carved in the British Isles or in Newfoundland.

In 1850, for example, a book of gravestone designs was published in London which contained thirty designs for various monuments.¹⁸ This book contained no text, and was strictly a working manual. Plate 17 of the book, for example, contained the design of a gravestone which was a large column topped by an urn (figure 13). Two gravestones were recorded in Brigus (see photograph 55 for one example) which most likely were carved from a similar design; a similar stone was also found in Harbour Grace. All of these stones were carved after 1850, and their design could have been influenced directly or indirectly by this book. The style of a stone in Witless Bay (photograph 56) indicates the Gothic influence which church leaders in England were attempting to introduce to gravestone design. An identical stone is found in Port Kirwan, indicating a common pattern.

Pattern books approved by church leaders were also published that contained page after page of detail work that could be used on the edges, borders, etc., of a gravestone. A headstone recorded in Brigus may have been carved using

¹⁸ E.W. Trendall, Monuments, Cenotaphs, Tombs, and Tablets, etc., etc., with their Details Drawn to a Large Scale, by which the Workman Can Erect Each design with Facility (London: Atchley & Co., 1850).

PLATE N° 17.

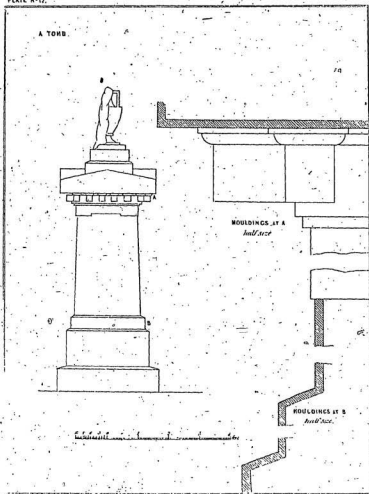
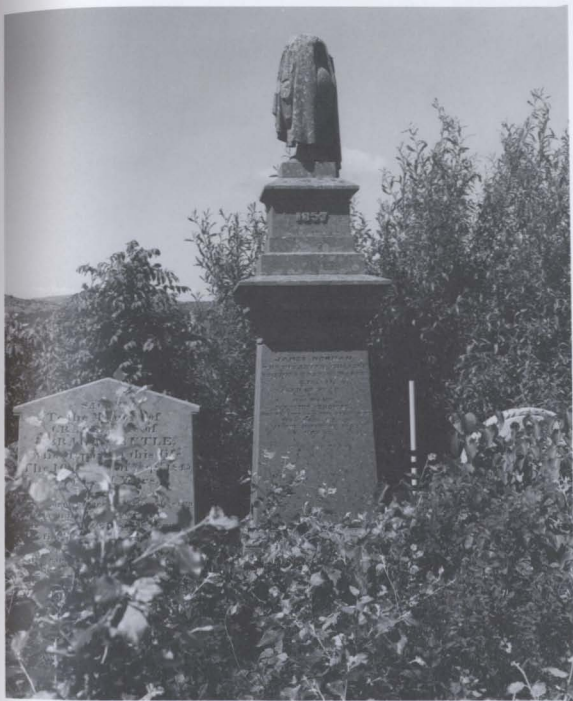


Figure 13. Gravestone design from Trendall's pattern Book.



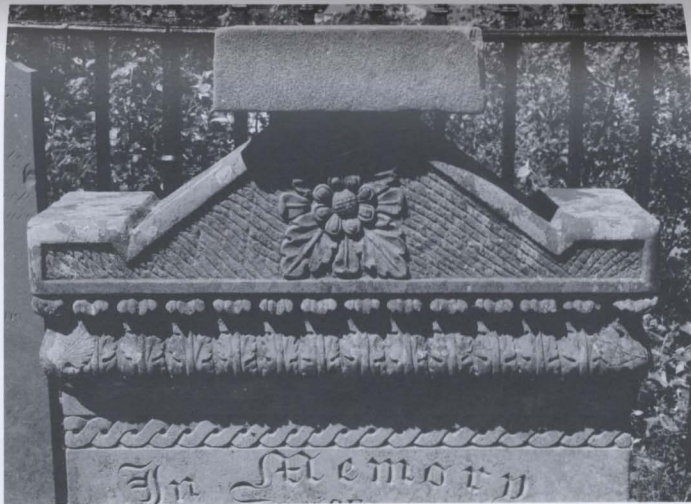
Photograph 55. Column with urn in Brigus.



Photograph 56. Gravestone in Witless Bay most likely carved from a design in a pattern book.

one of these books as a pattern. This stone (photograph 57) contains several decorative moldings and a floral design, and was carved by the St. John's mason, Alexander Smith, in 1853. Smith most likely used some type of book printed in the British Isles as a guide when carving these designs. In 1868, for example, a pattern book was published in England much like the one that Smith must have used. This book contained designs adopted from plants and flowers. One page contained patterns (figure 14) similar to the design of the Smith stone, while another page (figure 15) contained designs for moldings.¹⁹ These drawings were full-scale, and

¹⁹ See: Joseph Barlow Robinson, Architectural Foliage Adapted from Nature: Suitable for the Enrichment and Decoration of Buildings, Monuments, Furniture and Other Ornamental Works, Consisting of a Series of Designs for Capitals, Bosses, Crockets, Finials, Diapers, Corbets, &c., &c. (Derby: author, 1868), plates 11 and 15. Of all the writers who published approved pattern books for gravestone carvers, Robinson was probably the most prolific. A stone carver himself in Derby, Robinson continued to publish pattern books for many years, an indication of their success and widespread use. For other examples of books that he designed see: Cemeteriana, a Series of Designs for Monuments, Headstones, Tombs, Crosses, Tablets, &c. (Derby: J.B. Robinson, 1878); Cemetery and Church Yard Memorials (London: Art Journal, 1855); The Cemetery Mason's Useful Book of Designs for Headstones, Crosses, Alphabets, &c., Containing Forty-One Designs and a Plate of Alphabets (London: Bemrose and Sons; author, 1868); Designs for Gravestones, Crosses &c., with Illuminated Gothic Alphabets, Suitable for Sculptors, Statuaries, Masons, &c. (London: W. Bemrose & Sons, 1865); Gothic Ornaments Adapted from Nature with Selections from the Most Beautiful Details of Ancient and Modern Edifices (London: Art Journal, 1857); In Memoriam; a Series of Designs for Monuments, Tombs, Gravestones, Crosses &c. (Derby: author, 1862); In Remembrance; a Series of Designs for Monuments, Tombs, Gravestones, Crosses &c. (Derby: W. Bemrose & Sons, 1865); The Sculptor's and Cemetery Mason's Portfolio of Designs for Monuments, Tombs, Crosses, etc., with Detailed Plans (Derby: author, 1869); A Series of



Photograph 57. Decorative work on a stone in Brigus copied from a pattern book.

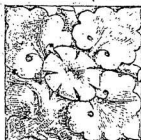
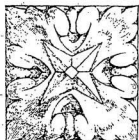
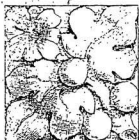
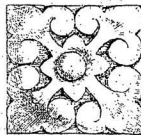
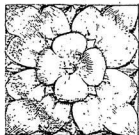
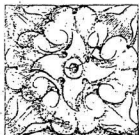
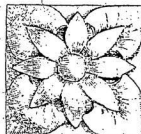
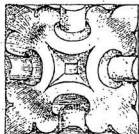
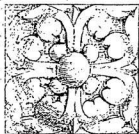
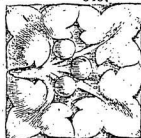
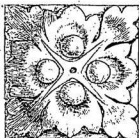
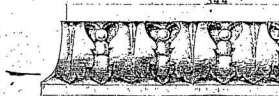


Figure 14. Floral designs from one of Robinson's pattern books.



GROUND IVY.



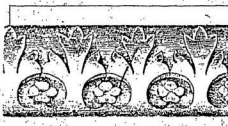
ROSE.



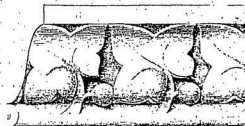
TREFOIL.



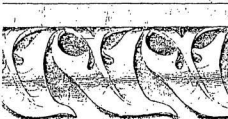
TREFOIL.



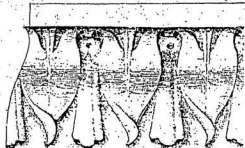
HAWTHORN.



IVY.



CONVOLVULUS.



CONVOLVULUS.

Figure 15.. Molding designs from one of Robinson's pattern books.

could be copied directly onto the gravestone.

Large numbers of various church-approved pattern books appeared in England from the early 1800's, and these were widely used by stone carvers as a source of designs for gravestones.²⁰ These guides influenced the symbols found on Newfoundland gravestones, first on those examples carved in England, and later on those produced by St. John's craftsmen. These books would change quite drastically the symbols that were used on gravestones in a short amount of time, indicating how little control the local

Designs for Carved Panels for Headstones, Crosses, etc.
(Derby: author, 1868).

20. For other examples of these pattern books see: James Bunstone Bunning, Designs for Tombs and Monuments (London: John Williams, 1839); John Gibbs, Designs for Christian Memorials for Churchyards and Cemeteries, for the Use of the Clergy, Architects, Sculptors, Carvers, Builders, Masons and Others (Oxford: author, 1868); John Gibbs, A Series of Designs for Gothic Monuments, Churchyard Crosses, Sepulchral Slabs, and Head Crosses, together with Remarks on Some Modern Erections and their Assumed Connection with Ecclesiastical Buildings - Pagan Symbolism - Unchristian Character - Position - Inscriptions, etc., etc. (London: George Bell, 1852); Theophilus Smith, Original Designs for Christian Memorials, Adapted for Churchyards and Cemeteries, Consisting of Headstones, Wood and Stone Crosses, Coped Tombs, Altar Tombs, Incised Slabs, &c., together with Remarks on Burial Places and Christian Memorials, Inscriptions, Texts and Epitaphs, Masonry, &c. (London: J.H. & J. Parker, 1864); William Borrowdale of Sunderland, Original Designs of Headstones, Crosses &c. (London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1881); Stephen Geary, Cemetery Designs for Tombs and Cenotaphs (London: Tilt & Bogue, 1840); W.C. Brangwyn, Gothic Memorials: being Sundry Sketches for Mural Monuments, Headstones, Crosses, etc. (Wolverhampton: author 1861); Douglas A. Clarkson, New Designs for Monuments, Tombs, Mural Tablets, Crosses, Head Stones and Ornamental Stones and Iron Work (London: Atchley & Co., 1852).

resident in Newfoundland had on the actual carving of a grave marker.

The extent of external control over the symbols used on gravestones recorded in Newfoundland can be seen through a brief survey of the changes that took place in these symbols in a period of approximately seventy years. During this time span of one lifetime, the content of the symbolic carving on the gravestone had changed twice, with no real connection to local traditions and belief. Such drastic changes point out how little the living could express their desire to maintain contact with the dead through these symbols. Three distinct chronological styles are evident: carvings that stress mortality, the Greek Revival, and church domination. The dates of the stones in Newfoundland containing these three styles overlap, but the change from one theme to the next is clear.

Many of the stones recorded in the communities surveyed dated before 1820 contain symbols which deal with the mortality of man. These carvings stress the shortness of life on earth, and the eventual death of all men. The gravestone speaks of the grave as the future home of all men.

A gravestone in Harbour Grace (photograph 58), dated 1792, contains symbols in the tympanum which speak, at least partially, of man's mortality. The right section of the tympanum contains a crown, possibly the crown of



Photograph 58. Gravestone in Harbour Grace containing "Remember Death" in the central cameo.

righteousness which was given to the dead who reached heaven. At the left is a book, which may be the Bible, or the Book of Judgement which contains the names of the saved and the damned. The top of the tympanum contains decorative carving which most likely was taken from a furniture or architecture pattern book. In the center of the tympanum, however, is a cameo which contains the words "Remember Death." These words, placed in the central position on the tympanum would warn the living who saw this stone to recognize their own mortality and the swiftness of life. Although the possibility of heavenly reward is present, the fact of death is placed in the most important position.

This theme of mortality is expressed on the footstone of the Mary and Henry Webber grave in Harbour Grace (photograph 59). The tympanum of this stone contains an hourglass, a symbol used in many regions as an indication of the swiftness of life.²¹ On either side of this hourglass are small decorative branches. Underneath the initials of the dead and the dates of death are the words "Memento Mori," Latin for "remember death." The living were warned through a

²¹ For examples of the use of the hourglass on grave-stones in England see: Burgess, "English Churchyard Memorials," pp. 168-169; Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 16 (1949), pp. 427-432; 13 (1946), p. 471; 16 (1949), pp. 427-432; Frederick Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments: Monumental Masons of East Anglia," Monumental Journal, 21 (1954), p. 295; "Early Work on Swithland Slate," Monumental Journal, 20 (1953), p. 513.



Photograph 59. Footstone in Harbour Grace containing an hourglass design.

symbol and the written word to recognize the nearness of death.

This same symbol of mortality was used on a headstone in Brigus dated 1851 (photograph 60). On this stone, however, wings have been added to the hourglass to emphasize the fleeting nature of life. This winged hourglass was used as a symbol of mortality in England and New England,²² and this example from Brigus is surrounded by a circle, most likely a wreath, which stresses the finality of death.

The use of the coffin as an emblem of mortality is extremely effective, and a gravestone in Lance Cove, Bell Island (photographs 61 and 62) provides an example.²³ This stone, carved in 1821, marks two graves, and the stone is divided into two portions. It is also the only stone

²² For examples of the use of the winged hourglass on gravestones in North America see: Emily Wasserman, Gravestone Designs: Rubbings and Photographs from Early New York and New Jersey (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972), plates 54-55, 71, 73; For English examples see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 14 (1947), pp. 439-440; A. Needham, "Old English Headstones," Monumental Journal, 20 (1953), p. 451.

²³ For the use of the coffin on gravestones see: Harriette M. Forbes, "The Lamsons of Charlestown, Stone Cutters," Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Old-Time New England, 17 (1927), pp. 127, 129-130; Wilfred A. Norris, "The Gravestones in the Old Burying Ground at Watertown, Mass.: Their Decorative Carving, Lettering and Symbolism," Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Old-Time New England, 16 (1925), p. 66.



Photograph 60. Brigus gravestone containing a winged-hourglass design.



Photograph 61. Front of gravestone at Lance Cove, Bell Island, containing coffin designs in the tympanum.



Photograph 62. Rear of Lance Cove gravestone with inscription.

recorded that was carved on both sides. Above the epitaph of each of the deceased is a coffin. This use of two coffins personalizes death, and connects the stone clearly to the two bodies buried beneath it. The use of the coffins stresses the fact that two humans are now dead, rather than any future state of existence. This symbol proclaims to the living their eventual home--a coffin and the grave--rather than heaven. A gravestone located in Portugal Cove also contains a coffin in the tympanum.

Many of the early gravestones in Newfoundland contained emblems of mortality which stressed the fleeting nature of life. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, the architectural styles of the Greek Revival had affected the designs of gravestones,²⁴ and symbols used in antiquity in connection with death began to appear on gravestones. Gravestone symbols changed in a short time from those emphasizing the mortality of man to those derived from the Classical Revival,²⁵ and local residents in Newfoundland

²⁴ For the effects of this revival on architectural styles see: Howard Major, The Domestic Architecture of the Early Republic: The Greek Revival (Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott, 1926); Talbot Hamlin, Greek Revival Architecture in America: Being an Account of Important Trends in American Architecture and American Life Prior to the War between the States (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1964).

²⁵ For a discussion of this stylistic change in New England see: James Deetz and Edwin S. Dethlefsen, "Death's Head, Cherub, Urn and Willow," Natural History, 76:3 (1967), pp. 28-37; Edwin Dethlefsen and James Deetz, "Death's

had no control over this change.

The earliest recorded stone that contained decorative symbols derived from Greek Classicism is dated 1786 (photograph 63). This marker, located in the Anglican churchyard in Harbour Grace, is a footstone, and contains a scallop shell in the tympanum surrounded by decorative scrolls.²⁶ The shell was used in Greece in connection with death as a sign of future resurrection, referring to the rebirth of Aphrodite in a scallop shell. The decorative carving on this stone resembles that on the marker carved by Gollledge from Bristol found in the same churchyard (photograph 30, p.261). Gollledge used an urn in this stone which was carved in 1797, and most likely carved this marker containing the shell.

The urn was another classical symbol connected with death that was used on Newfoundland gravestones.²⁷ Urns

Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries," American Antiquity, 31 (1966), pp. 502-510.

²⁶For an example of the shell motif recorded on a headstone in Britain see: David Neave and Vanessa Heron, "Slate Headstones and their Engravers," Local History, 8 (1969), plate opposite p. 213; also see: Kenneth Lindley, Of Graves and Epitaphs (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1965), p. 100.

²⁷For examples of the use of the urn on gravestones in North America see: Carole Hanks, Early Ontario Gravestones (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1974), pp. 58-60; Wasserman, Gravestone Designs, pp. 27 and plates 62, 63, 121, 124, 126-129; G. Walker Jacobs, Stranger Stop and Cast an Eye: A Guide to Gravestones and Gravestone Rubbing



Photograph 63. Footstone in Harbour Grace containing shell motif.

were used by the Greeks to contain the ashes of cremated bodies, and thus became associated with death generally. In spite of its obvious non-Christian connections, clergymen permitted the use of this symbol on gravestones in Newfoundland, unlike some clergymen in England.²⁸

A gravestone in Brigus (photograph 64), dated 1844, contains a simplistic treatment of the urn motif, with no other carving appearing in the tympanum. The shape of the stone and the position and style of the urn suggest that the design may have been taken from wall mural pattern intended for use within a church. Headstones of this basic wall mural shape but containing an urn within an elaborately decorated tympanum were recorded at Port Kirwan (photograph 52, p. 330), Tors Cove and Port de Grave. These stones were probably carved by the same craftsman using a common pattern. A more elaborate version of the urn motif, draped with a mourning shroud, was recorded on gravestones in Brigus (photograph 55, p. 339) and Harbour Grace. Three stones, carved in 1846, 1848 and 1862 all contain the same type of urn on different bases. The shroud and urn, as a symbol

(Brattleboro, Vt.: Stephen Greene Press, 1972), p. 33, figures 5, 21, 48; Elmer L. Smith, Early American Grave Stone Designs (Witmer, Pa.: Applied Arts, 1968), p. 34; for examples in England see: Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, pp. 175-176; Needham, "Old English Headstones," 20 (1953), p. 785..

²⁸ For complaints against this symbol in England see: Smith, Original Designs for Christian Memorials, pp. 10-11.



Photograph 64. Briggs stone carved with an urn in the tympanum.

connected with death, was also used by the Greeks in ancient times.

The urn motif was relatively small compared to the space within the tympanum which could be used for decorative work. Edward Rice, the St. John's mason, carved a stone in 1850 that was used in Brigus, in which he solved this spatial problem (photograph 65). Rice carved two urns in the tympanum but still had to eliminate much of the empty space in the center by also carving a circular rosette on top.

In many parts of North America, the spatial difficulties encountered when using an urn motif in the gravestone tympanum were eliminated by combining this motif with another classical symbol--the willow.²⁹ In Newfoundland, however, this combination was not recorded, but instead the willow was combined with other designs.

Two headstones carved by Alexander Smith and found in Brigus (photographs 35 and 36, pp. 283-284) contain a willow tree accompanied by what appears to be the base of an obelisk.³⁰ Another gravestone in Brigus (photograph 66)

²⁹For examples of the urn and willow used on gravestones see: Edmund Vincent Gillon, Jr., Early New England Gravestone Rubbings (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), plates 75-84, 86, 88, 90-93, 95, 100-101, 103, 105-106, 108, 111-120, 123-124; Hanks, Early Ontario Gravestones, pp. 46, 48, 50, 57-58.

³⁰For an example of this design see: Hanks, Early Ontario Gravestones, p. 51.



Photograph 65. Gravestone carved by Edward Rice, located in Brigus, containing two urns and a circular design in the tympanum.



Photograph 66. Willow tree motif with an upward-pointing hand on a gravestone in Brigus.

contains a willow tree combined with an upward-pointing hand. While the willow represented the sorrow at death, this hand indicated the new life in heaven, located above the earth. This specific design was transitional, since the upward-pointing hand gradually was used to fill the entire tympanum, while the use of the willow ceased.

Along with urns and willows, the use of flowers as a motif on gravestones had origins in the Classical revival. Flowers were used by the Greeks and Romans at funerals as a symbol of the transitoriness of life, and this symbol was used in sculpture connected with death.³¹ A gravestone in Harbour Grace (photograph 67), dated 1783, contains a basket of flowers in the tympanum.³² Several blooming flowers and buds are found in this basket, as well as flowers which are apparently drooping over the edges, indicating the fleeting nature of life. A gravestone in Brigus (photograph 68) depicts this theme even more graphically. This stone, which marks the grave of two children, contains a sickle in the tympanum cutting a flower in bloom. Symbolically, the lives

³¹ J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, trans. Jack Sage (New York: Philosophical Library, 1962), pp. 104-105; for a general discussion of the use of the floral motif on headstones in England see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 16 (1949), pp. 365-370.

³² For an English example of this flower basket motif see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 18 (1951), p. 645.



Photograph 67. Flower basket motif on a stone in Harbour Grace.



Photograph 68. Flower and sickle motif on a Brigus gravestone.

of these children were cut before they could fully develop.³³

Two gravestones in Brigus provide examples of the influence of the Classical revival on headstone design, as well as the use of patterns in the carving of grave markers. These stones (photographs 69 and 70), dated 1829 and 1830, contain similar elements in both tympanums. Dominating the central portion of each are two Classical pillars, superimposed on a heart. On either side of these pillars are decorative motifs, probably taken from some type of pattern book. The use of pillars on a gravestone has not been found elsewhere during research for this study, either in Newfoundland or in areas of North America and the British Isles. The use of this design on these two headstones may be due solely to a particular pattern book owned by the carver.

The use of the cherub or winged soul as a symbol on gravestones in Newfoundland is related at least partially to the Classical revival. This motif was often referred to by church leaders as "cupid," and there was no apparent Christian basis for its usage.³⁴ In spite of this connection

³³For the same design in Kent see: Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, p. 204; cf. William T. Vincent, In Search of Gravestones Old and Curious (London: Mitchell & Hughes, 1896), p. 26 and figure 49.

³⁴The use of the winged soul or cherub on gravestones has been extensive; for examples from various regions see: Hanks, Early Ontario Gravestones, pp. 80-81, 83-87; Jacobs, Stranger Stop, pp. 23-26, figures 4, 9, 20, 38, 47, 61;



Photograph 69. Brigus headstone containing a column and heart design.



Photograph 70. Heart and column design on a Brigus gravestone.

with antiquity, this design appears to be a transitional motif between the more obvious Greek revival symbols, and designs which had a Christian theological content. The cherub could be considered as the soul of the deceased, and thus be an acknowledgement of life after death. The stones recorded in Newfoundland that contain this symbol seem to indicate this connection.

A gravestone in Brigus contains not only a cherub, but also several designs which indicate the stylistic

E.M. Shilstone, Monumental Inscriptions in the Burial Ground of the Jewish Synagogue at Bridgetown, Barbados (New York: American Jewish Historical Society, 1956), pp. 75, 117, 121; Lindley, Of Graves and Epitaphs, pp. 95-97; Philip Mason Smith, "Burial Ground Art," Down East, 12:4 (1965), pp. 16-19; Allan I. Ludwig, "Some Examples of Early New England Grave-stones," Graphis, 19 (July, 1963), pp. 327-328, 330-333; Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 13 (1946), pp. 515-518; 14 (1947), pp. 72, 285-287, 494-496; 16 (1949), pp. 35-37; 17 (1950), p. 227; 23 (1956), p. 748; A. Needham, "Old English Headstones," Monumental Journal, 20 (1953), pp. 499-501, 647, 704-707; Margaret G. Aldred, "The Memorials of a Surrey Village Church: St. Mary's, Walton-on-Thames," Monumental Journal, 19 (1952), pp. 591-592; "Forms and Types of Memorials: 4 - The Headstone and Stele," Monumental Journal, 21 (1954), pp. 34-35; Pamela Goyer, "The Parish Churchyards of Warblington with Emsworth," Commemorative Art, 32 (1965), pp. 165, 168; "Some Eighteenth Century Memorials in the Parish Church, Ely," Monumental and Commemorative Art Journal, 29 (1962), pp. 219-221; Alan Reid, "The Churchyard Memorials of Abercorn, Bowden, and Carrington," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, ser. 4, 8 (1909-10), pp. 40-42, 44, 46, 57, 65, 67, 70, 75; Alan Reid, "Sculptured Sarcophagus and Churchyard Memorials at Dalmeny; with Notes on the Churchyards of Edzell, Lethnot, and Stracathro," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, ser. 5, 1 (1914), p. 294.

transition from Greek revival to Christian themes (photograph 71). A winged cherub is located in the center of the tympanum, flanked on either side by what appear to be stylized urns with handles. Above the cherub is a crown and rays emanating from a cloud. An eye in the left portion of the tympanum, together with the cloud, suggests the presence of God. Thus, both Christian and pre-Christian designs are combined in this stone.

In some cases, the use of this cherub was most likely no more than decorative. On a large chest tomb in Brigus (photographs 72 and 23, p. 241), for example, the two smaller ends contained a winged cherub. This tomb marks the grave of a seventy year old native of Mothill, Co. Waterford, who died in 1842. It is unlikely that this cherub was carved to represent the soul of the deceased, especially since he was seventy two years old. Instead, the design may merely indicate that angels are part of the new life that the deceased has now entered. On a stone in Bareneed carved by the St. John's craftsman, Alexander Smith (photograph 34, p. 281), a cherub was used in the tympanum, again most likely as a decorative motif. The comical expression on the angel's face indicates a lack of skill on the carver's part in executing this design.

In some cases, it seems that the gravestone carver attempted to use the cherub as a representation of the deceased, or part of the deceased's family. A gravestone in



Photograph 71. Brigus gravestone with cherub, urn and crown motifs in the tympanum.



Photograph 72. Cherub design on Brigus chest tomb.

Harbour Grace (photograph 73) marks the grave of a woman who died in 1800 at the age of forty one. The tympanum of her gravestone contains seven winged angels surrounded by a seated woman. The epitaph mentions that this woman was the mother of eight children, perhaps the seven angels plus the child on the woman's lap in the tympanum. Placing these figures together on the gravestone would lessen the break of death by assuring the living that spiritually the mother and her children were still linked.

With some gravestones, the design of these winged angels changed, and took on a more human face, in an apparent attempt at portraiture.³⁵ Expressions of contact of the living with the dead at the place of burial could now focus on a representation of the deceased when he was alive, and would psychologically negate the decay of the grave. An image of a living person would now be found on the gravestone, even if it had the body of a spirit.

A gravestone at Brigus (photograph 74) marks the grave of a two year old girl who died in 1830. The facial


³⁵For examples of the use of portraiture in other regions see: Beulah Price, "The Custom of Using Portrait Statues as Gravestones," Mississippi Folklore Register, 3 (1969), pp. 59-64; Beulah Price, "The Custom of Using Portrait Statues and Other Portrait Likenesses at Graves," Mississippi Folklore Register, 3 (1969), pp. 113-120; Beulah Price, "More on Gravestone Customs: The Custom of Using Sculptured Portrait Medallions on Gravestones," Mississippi Folklore Register, 4 (1970), pp. 41-51; Tashjian, Memorials for Children of Change, pp. 108-144; Harriette M. Forbes, "Early Portrait Sculpture in New England," Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Old-Time New England, 19 (1929), pp. 159-173.



Photograph 73. Harbour Grace stone with a mother and child surrounded by seven cherubs.



Photograph 74. A cherub with the features of a young child on a Brigus headstone.



features of the cherub in the tympanum clearly resemble a young child. Since this stone was probably carved in the West Country, the carver most likely never saw this girl. However, he probably carved stones of a similar design in the West Country, all containing a stereotyped face of a child. When the members of this girl's family in Brigus would visit her grave, they were met with this child's face, lessening the impact of death. This image also suggested the continued existence of their daughter in some higher life.

In Petty Harbour, a headstone marks the grave of a nineteen year old who died in 1823 (photograph 75). The cherub on this stone again is anthropomorphic, and most likely was intended to resemble Annette Chafe. Since this stone was carved in south Devon, the carver again would most likely have not seen the child. The facial features may have been invented, or copied from those of a girl in England.

The use of the cherub design permitted the carver to produce an image that theoretically resembled the deceased, and therefore assisted the living to maintain their contact with the dead. This practice of carving anthropomorphic cherubs is no longer carried on, but another custom has taken its place. In many cases, the living today will purchase a special case in which they insert a picture of the deceased when living, and this is fastened to the front of the headstone. This case is usually oval in shape, approximately



Photograph 75. Cherub motif on a gravestone in Petty Harbour.

four inches by six inches in size. A waterproof metal frame holds a photograph, and the top surface is covered with a glass window. On a stone in Bay Bulls (photograph 76), the photograph of a young girl has been placed in such a case. When this grave is visited, an image of the deceased when alive is presented, and the living recall past memories, rather than thinking about the girl's death and burial. This image produces thoughts of the previous social role of this person, and thus lessens the social disruptiveness of death.³⁶

Symbolic designs taken largely from the Classical Revival replaced the symbols of mortality found on earlier Newfoundland gravestones. The use of symbols such as urns and willows was controlled largely by gravestone carvers, and local residents most likely had no idea of the origins of these designs. In fact, the rapidity with which they replaced the older symbols of mortality indicates the extent of external control of gravestone design.

On some Newfoundland headstones that were carved in the early nineteenth century, neither the symbols of mortality nor those connected with the Classical revival were used. Instead, merely decorative designs were placed in the

³⁶I have seen gravestones with these photographs in Bras d'Or, Nova Scotia; for an example of this practice in Philadelphia see: Elizabeth Mathias, "The Italian-American Funeral: Persistence through Change," Western Folklore, 33 (1974), plates 1 and 2.



Photograph 76. Bay Bulls gravestone with attached photograph.

tympanum, or, in the case of some Roman Catholic stones, a simple cross was used.

A circular design often representing a flower was used widely on many stones. The geometric nature of these designs, as well as their use at the top of the tympanum, most likely points to their purely decorative use, rather than any symbolism connected with the flower. There are examples of this design at Brigus (1853) (photograph 77), Cupids (1849) (photograph 78), and Port de Grave (1849). A stone at Brigus (1850) (photograph 79) contains a very detailed version of this motif carved by a St. John's craftsman. These designs most likely were chosen from pattern books by gravestone carvers, and would not reflect local beliefs.

Many headstones, dated before 1860, that mark the graves of Roman Catholics contain only a simple, incised cross in the tympanum, with the letters "I H S" under it (photograph 32, p. 265).³⁷ Most of these earlier stones were carved in Ireland, and local residents in Newfoundland apparently did not choose this design. Rather, it was dictated by economic factors. In Ireland, wealthier people purchased stones containing the instruments of the passion, such as the stone in Port Kirwan (photograph 48, p. 321). Only poorer people would obtain a stone with such a simple design. A

³⁷In Newfoundland, the letters "I H S" have been explained as "in hoc signio," "in his service," "I have suffered."



Photograph 77. Flower design on a Brigus gravestone.



Photograph 78. Circular design on a Cupids headstone.



Photograph 79. Brigus headstone with three circular motifs.

field worker in Co. Wexford noticed the prevalence of stones containing both the instruments of the passion and the cross with "I H S", and commented, "I am inclined to think that these headstones [containing the cross and "I H S"] were the poor and cheaper type of the period."³⁸ Residents in Newfoundland could afford only this cheaper variety, and they had no choice as to what symbols appeared on the stone.

A gravestone in Tors Cove (photograph 80) represents a transitional type between the stones containing only a cross and "I H S", and those with the instruments of the passion. This stone, dated 1826, could have been carved either in Ireland or in St. John's, but if the latter, the slate for the marker had to be imported. The tympanum contains the central cross with the letters "I H S" under it. On the top of the cross are the letters "I N R I", the first letters of the Latin inscription designating Jesus as King of the Jews which Pilate placed on the cross.³⁹ Underneath the tympanum are the Latin words; "Gloria in Excelsis Deo." To the left of the cross is an eight-pointed star, while to the right is an anthropomorphic moon (photograph 81).⁴⁰ The outline of

³⁸ Irish Folklore Commission, Manuscript Document, Vol. 1141, p. 153.

³⁹ See: Appleton and Bridges, Symbolism, pp. 47-48.

⁴⁰ The use of the eight-pointed star and the anthropomorphic quarter moon was quite extensive in many areas of



Photograph 80. Tors Cove headstone with an elaborate "I H S" design.



Photograph 81. Anthropomorphic moon on Tors Cove stone.

this moon was drawn with some type of compass, indicated by the circle with a hole in the center. Directly under the "H" in "I H S" is what appears to be the stone mason's trademark, a square, which was one of the mason's essential tools (photograph 82). A face was placed in the center of a square, perhaps a simple attempt at self-portraiture.

Four gravestones in Bay Bulls standing in a row all contain Greek crosses, the only recorded examples of this design in Newfoundland. This symbol was probably chosen by the carver, rather than by local residents. Each cross was placed in the center of the tympanum, and the designs are variants of one another. One of the stones (photograph 83), dated 1848, contains an elaborate variation which resembles four tulips rather than a cross.⁴¹ The mason may have carved

Co. Wexford; see: Irish Folklore Commission, Manuscript Documents, Vol. 1141, p. 139; also see: Ada Leask, "Some Folk Art in Irish Graveyards," Monumental Journal, 28 (1961), pp. 103-105; 29 (1962), pp. 66-71, 96-98; Ada K. Longfield, "Some 18th Century Irish Tombstones," Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Journal, 74, part 2 (1944), pp. 63-72; 75 (1945), pp. 76-84; for the use of an anthropomorphic moon on Pennsylvania German gravestones see: Smith, Early American Grave Stone Designs, p. 19; cf. Innes Hart, "Rude Forefathers," Architectural Review, 86 (1939), p. 188, top photograph; for a discussion of the symbolism of the sun and moon used with the cross see: George Ferguson, Signs and Symbols in Christian Art (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 45.

⁴¹ For Pennsylvania German headstones which contain tulip motifs that resemble the design on this stone see: Smith, Early American Grave Stone Designs, pp. 5, 7-8, 10-13, 18, 22, 29-31; Frances Lichten, Folk Art of Rural Pennsylvania (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), pp. 130-132.



Photograph 82. Mason's square and face on Tors Cove stone.



Photograph 83. Greek cross on a stone in Bay Bulls.

these four stones at the same time and felt a need to vary the design on each example.

Two major styles of gravestone symbols were extensively used before 1860; those dealing with mortality, and those with symbols of the Classical revival. Stones used by Roman Catholics frequently had only a cross in the tympanum, with little additional decoration. By 1860, however, St. John's stone carvers, influenced by religious movements in England, began to use symbols which were considered basically Christian. In the time-span of a few decades, symbols changed from Classical or the simple cross to such designs as the Sacred Heart, the lamb, or the hand pointing to heaven. The extent of this stylistic change can be seen in the symbols used on the gravestones in the Anglican churchyard in Pouch Cove. Of the thirty eight stones, dated between 1845 and 1914, that were recorded, thirty five contained some type of design in the tympanum. Various combinations of symbols were used, and many stones contained two or three motifs. Table 3 lists the symbols and the frequency of their occurrence. Of the stones carved after 1860, only one contained an urn; there were none containing a willow, cherub or any of the emblems of mortality. Eight stones contained some type of floral motif, usually a single rose. All other symbols used were distinctively Christian. Symbols used on Newfoundland gravestones after 1860 were now almost exclusively Christian in origin. This type

TABLE 3

GRAVESTONE SYMBOLS IN THE ANGLICAN
CHURCHYARD, POUCH COVE

Symbol	Number of stones containing this symbol
Cross	16
Flower	8
Willow	1
Urn	1
Lamb	3
Crown	4
Hand pointing upward	6
Two hands clasping	11
Hand writing in book	1

of symbol replaced the earlier styles completely, and the rapid change was brought about by carvers in St. John's. Local residents merely accepted this change.

These gravestone symbols, introduced around 1860, are still the major types used today. Local residents have no real choice in the design of the symbol. They can only choose one of the designs offered by St. John's masons. Catalogues showing various gravestone designs are printed by local carvers, and symbols are ordered simply by using the numbers in the catalogue. Alternatively, the carver's

place of business can be visited. Stones containing various symbols are displayed, and a design can be chosen from these models.⁴²

The symbols used on gravestones in Newfoundland have never permitted the living to express their desire to maintain contact with the dead. The actual symbols were not chosen by local residents, but rather, by the carver himself. These symbols were taken primarily from printed patterns, or objects connected with the church building, rather than designed totally by the craftsman for a specific person. The lack of local control over these symbols is also evident in the fact that three stylistic trends were common on Newfoundland stones within an eighty-year period. The earliest stones contained symbols dealing with the mortality of man; by the 1820's, however, Classical motifs were becoming widespread. Around 1860, St. John's carvers, largely influenced by church reform movements in England, had almost completely discarded Classical designs and replaced them with Christian symbols.

Gravestone designs in Newfoundland have always been externally controlled, and the choice of a symbol by the residents purchasing markers in the late 1700's was as limited as it is today. Symbols were largely decorative,

⁴²For comments about this contemporary practice see: MUNFLA Q74B-3-6; Q74B-13-6; Q74B-14-6; Q74B-20-6.

with no real expression of contact of the living with the dead. The purely decorative aspect of gravestone symbols was indicated in a conversation with a resident from Pouch Cove. When asked how a symbol for a gravestone was chosen today, he replied:

Well, I'll say, I'll say, us people here in Newfoundland going up to get a headstone. That man got somethin' on his headstone, I, I won't get somethin' like he get. I get somethin' that's different. If he got a hand pointing up, now I don't get that kind of one for my wife. I get one with hands another way.⁴³

The symbol expressed no real contact with the dead.

In Newfoundland, therefore, the carving of a symbol in the tympanum of gravestones afforded the living little opportunity to express their desire to maintain contact with the dead. Beneath this tympanum, however, lettering was carved. The designs of the letters themselves, as well as the actual content of the inscription could provide the living with such a channel. In most cases, these inscriptions were determined by external guides, just as the symbols above them. In order to realize the viability of this channel of contact, both the lettering styles and the inscriptions themselves will be discussed.

Lettering occurs on almost all post-Reformation gravestones in both the British Isles and in North America. The desire to mark the location of a specific body contributed

⁴³ MUNFLA 74-78/44 MS.

to the rise of the gravestone, and thus functionally this marker had to contain an inscription which identified the body beneath it. When each gravestone was carved, the living could choose the actual style of lettering that would be placed on the stone. Through the use of lettering distinctively created by local residents, the living could show their continued contact with the dead by using a style that would be associated with the individual dead. In most cases, however, the lettering styles were determined by the stone carver, and borrowed almost exclusively from printed sources.⁴⁴

With the rise of a mercantile class in the British Isles in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, literacy and the number of people who learned to write increased. This increase was due to a certain extent to a number of printed instruction manuals which appeared during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These books, commonly referred to as "writing masters" or "copy books," contained page after page of specimens of handwriting which could be used as guides for those who wanted to learn to write. The publication of these books was so frequent that a recent

⁴⁴For comments about the influence of the stone carver in determining these lettering styles see: British Institute of Industrial Art, The Art of Lettering and Its Use in Divers Crafts and Trades (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 5.

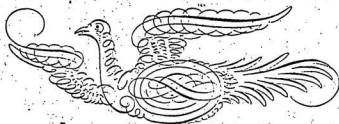
author commented that, "from 1680 to 1740 hardly a year passed without an important copy book appearing."⁴⁵ As these books became widely distributed, gravestone carvers in England and Ireland obtained copies and soon realized that these scripts could be used as models for the lettering carved on the gravestone.

The most widespread and probably the most influential guide used by gravestone carvers in the British Isles was George Bickham's Universal Penman, published in sections between 1740 and 1741.⁴⁶ Much of Bickham's book contains examples of simple, hand-written script (figure 16). A headstone in Port Kirwan (photograph 84), dated 1746, and most likely carved in Ireland, contains this similar hand-written script, and a guide similar to Bickham's may have been used.

Bickham's Penman also contained examples of various scripts which also could have been used on special sections

⁴⁵ Philip Hofer, "The Importance of The Universal Penman in Relation to Modern Calligraphy," in George Bickham, The Universal Penman (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1968), p. [iii].

⁴⁶ For a modern reprint of Bickham's book see: Ibid.; for discussions of the influence of these early copy books on gravestone lettering styles see: Frederick Burgess, "Tombstone Lettering on Slate," Typographica, 13 (1966), pp. 2-19. I owe this reference to Paul Smith; Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 13 (1946), pp. 224-233; 16 (1949), pp. 671-672; 19 (1952), pp. 503-508; 21 (1954), p. 689; M.W. Barley, "Slate Headstones in Nottinghamshire," Thoroton Society Transactions, 52 (1948), p. 73.



LIBERTY

*O Liberty! thou Goddess dearly bought,
 'possess of Bliss, & pregnant with Delight!
 Eternal Pleasures in thy Presence reign,
 And smiling Plenty leads thy wanton Train:
 Eas'd of her Load, Subjection grows more light,
 And Poverty looks cheerful in thy Sight:
 Thou mak'st the gloomy Face of Nature gay,
 Giv'st Beauty to the Sun, & Pleasure to the day.*

Champion Script

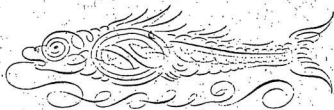
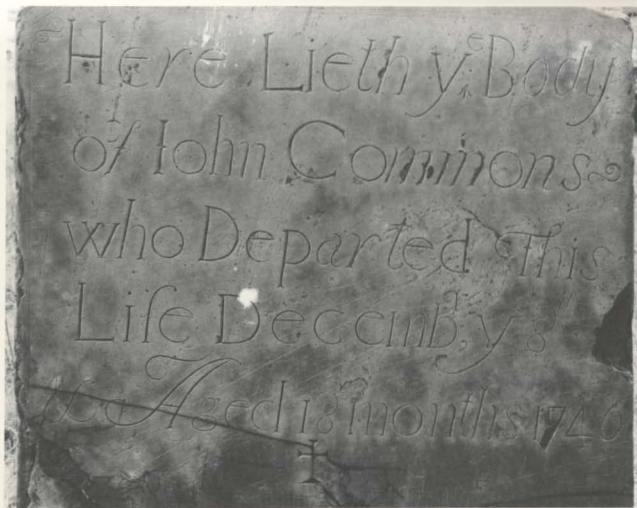


Figure 16. . Page from Bickham's Universal Penman.



Photograph 84. Lettering style on a gravestone in Port Kirwan, dated December 8, 1746.

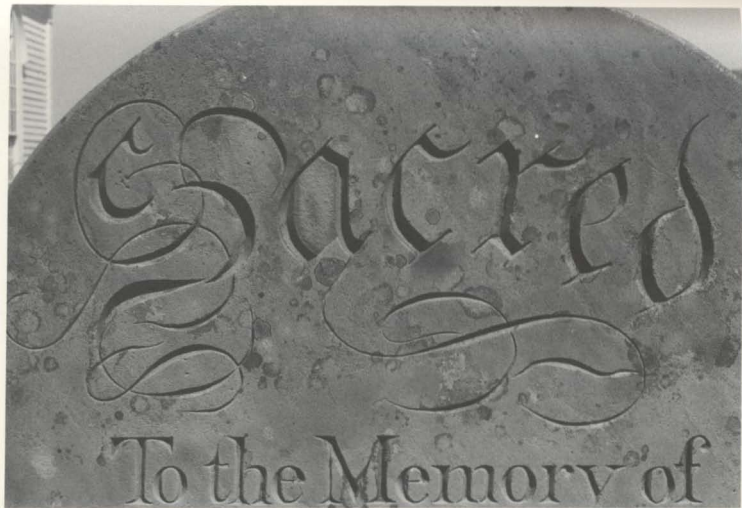
of the gravestone. A stone from Brigus (photograph 85), for example, contains what Bickham has called a "German text"⁴⁷ used in the first word "Sacred." This script most likely was obtained from a lettering guidebook. The upper left-hand portion of the "S" was carved too low, and the rest of the letter was carved in a higher position.

Early copy books primarily contained hand-written scripts. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, lettering guides began to appear which contained instructions on how to make geometrical letters, using a straight edge and compass. These books were soon adopted by gravestone carvers as lettering guides in their carving, in order to insure that all letters were uniform size.

In 1813, William Hollins published his British Standard of Capital Letters,⁴⁸ and this book soon became widely used by carvers. In his book, Hollins contains detailed instructions on how to draw each letter of the alphabet geometrically. Written instructions are accompanied by a drawing which indicated where lines and circles were to be drawn (figure 17).

⁴⁷Bickham, The Universal Penman, p. 210.

⁴⁸William Hollins, The British Standard of the Capital Letters Contained in the Roman Alphabet, Forming a Compleat Code of Systematic Rules for a Mathematical Construction and Accurate Formation of the Same, with Letters of Exemplification, Elementary and Compleat; together with an Useful and Practical Appendix (Birmingham: J. Taylor, Holborn, 1813).



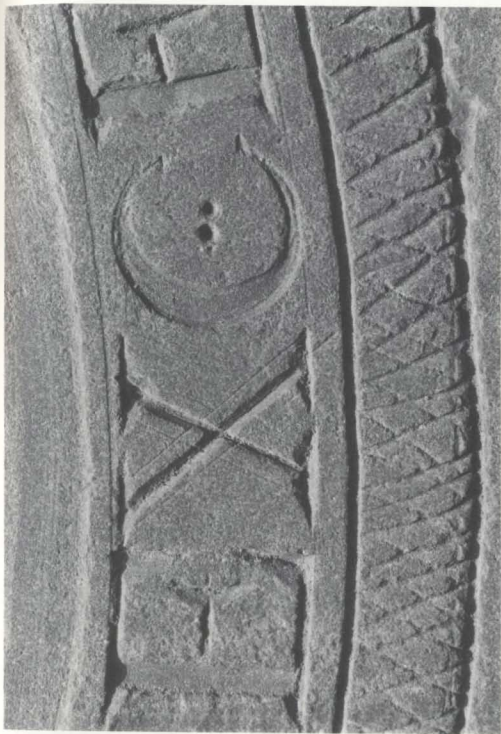
Photograph 85. Special lettering used for the word "Sacred" on a stone in Brigus.

The craftsman who carved a headstone in Tors Cove (see above, pp.383-386) used some type of geometrical lettering guide similar to the system in Hollins. In the word "EXCELCIS" found on the stone (photograph 86), two holes are found in the center of the "C". These holes are the centers of the circles which formed the inner and outer edges of the letter. Letters on this stone which contained circular portions were all drawn with some type of compass, as holes are evident in the center of the circles.

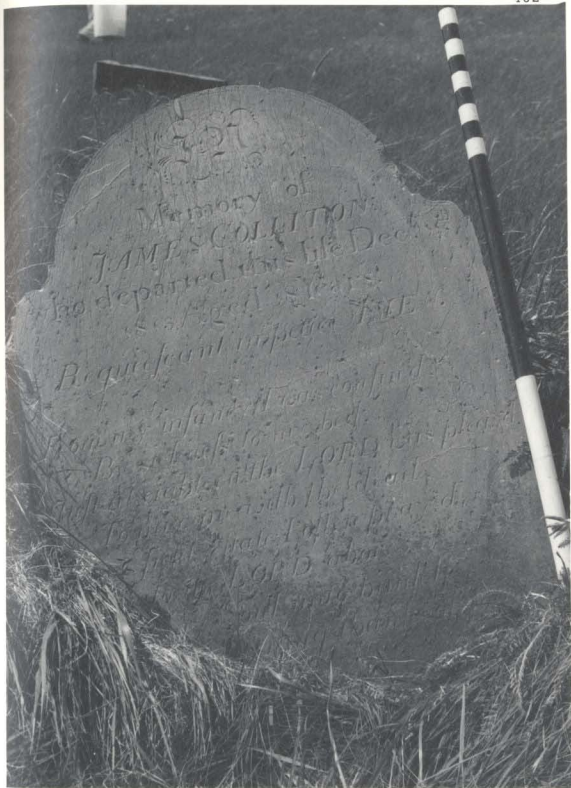
The technique employed in lettering the first word of an inscription was similar to a practice used on medieval illuminated manuscripts.⁴⁹ The first word, usually the "IN" of "IN MEMORY OF", or "SACRED" in "SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF" was lettered in a decorative script.⁵⁰ A headstone in Ferryland (photograph 87) for example, contains the word "IN"

⁴⁹ For a discussion of these illuminated manuscripts see: David Diringer, The Illuminated Book: Its History and Production (rev. ed.; London: Faber and Faber, 1967); for a discussion of this art of lettering in the Pennsylvania German culture used on various documents see: Henry S. Borneman, Pennsylvania German Illuminated Manuscripts: A Classification of Fraktur-Schriften and an Inquiry into their History and Art (Norristown, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Society, 1937); these fraktur artists also used their talents in the lettering of gravestones; for an example see: Monroe H. Fabian, "John Daniel Eisenbrown, Frakturist," Pennsylvania Folklife, 24:2 (1974-75), p. 35.

⁵⁰ Higher prices were charged by the carver for this special script used for the "IN" or "SACRED" at the beginning of an inscription; for an example see: Cecil J. Collacott, "Headstone-Cutter's Account Book," Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries, 29 (1964), pp. 247-248.



Photograph 86. Lettering guides on a gravestone in Tors Cove.



Photograph 87. Special script used for the first word of the inscription on a gravestone in Ferryland.

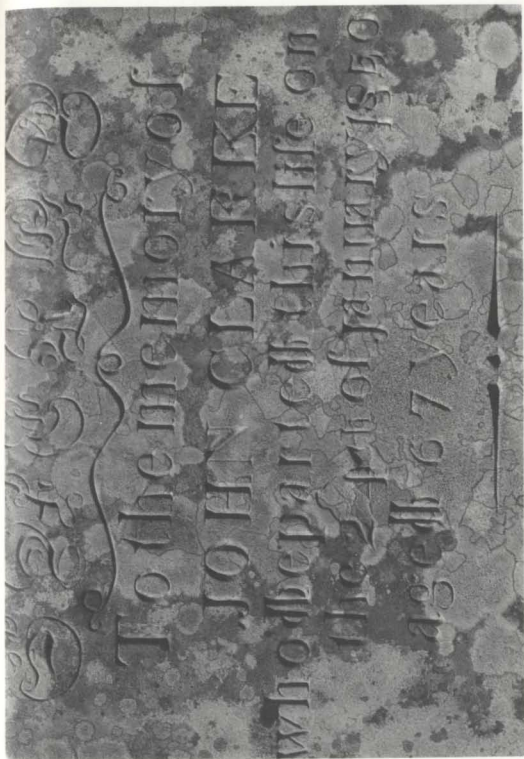
carved with an elaborate script and surrounded by flourishes. These special scripts were taken from handbooks containing sample alphabets. In some cases, an unskilled stone carver did not faithfully copy this special script from the pattern, and the result was often a jumble of flourishes. On a stone in Brigus (photograph 88), the word "SACRED" is barely discernible.

By the nineteenth century with the development of many types of print used in books and pamphlets, gravestone carvers used lettering styles that departed from the standard Roman script. On a headstone in Brigus (photograph 89), for example, the lettering style emphasizes the serifs of each character, while retaining the old style "s" ("f") to give the appearance of a traditional epitaph.

A stone in Port de Grave (photograph 90) demonstrates the extensive influence of these lettering guides on the carving inscriptions. Four distinct styles were used on four consecutive lines, and these styles most likely were listed on several pages of one book, such as one of Robinson's guides (figure 18).⁵¹

Although printed lettering guides could be used by carvers, these printed books did not give exact instructions

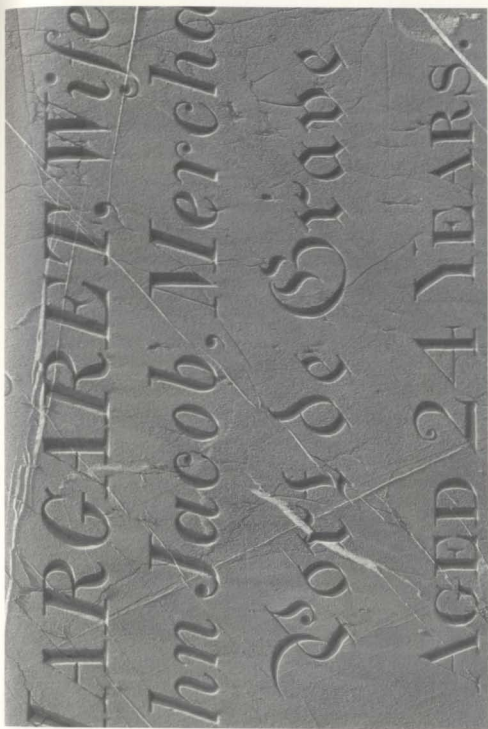
⁵¹ Joseph Barlow Robinson, Trade Secrets: A Collection of Practical Receipts for the Use of Sculptors, Modellers, Stone Masons, Builders, Marble Masons, Polishers, &c., to which is Added a Description of the Various Stones in the United Kingdom Suitable for Monumental Purposes (Derby: author, 1862), pp. 18-19.



Photograph 88. Various mistakes in lettering on a stone in Brigus.

In Memory of
STEPHEN PERCEY
who departed this life the
12th day of July 1808
Aged 26 Years & 3 Months
Noblest Hall Number in the ground
Till the last trumpet Joyful sound
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise
And in my Saviours image rise

Photograph 89. Lettering style on a stone in Brigus.



Photograph 90. Four lettering styles on a stone in Port de Grave.

a b c d e f g h i j

k l m n o p q r s t

u v w x y z . , ; :

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

A B C D E F G H I

J K L M N O P Q R

S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

n o p q r s t u v w x y z

. , ; : ' 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9 0

A B C D E F G

H I J K L M N

O P Q R S T U

V W X Y Z Æ Æ

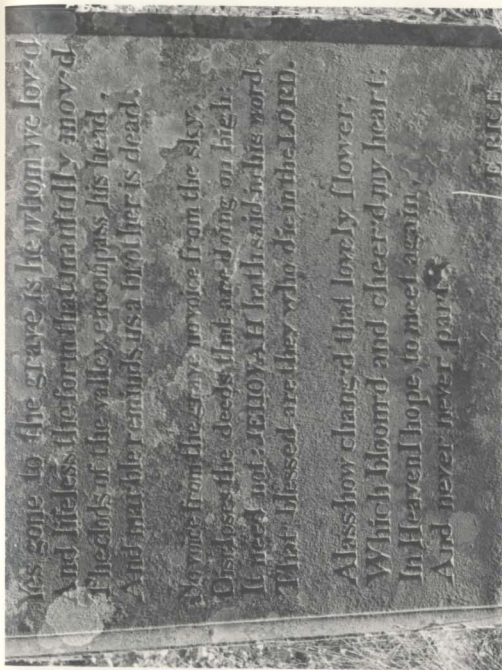
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 . , ; : &

Figure 18. Lettering guide from one of Robinson's pattern books.

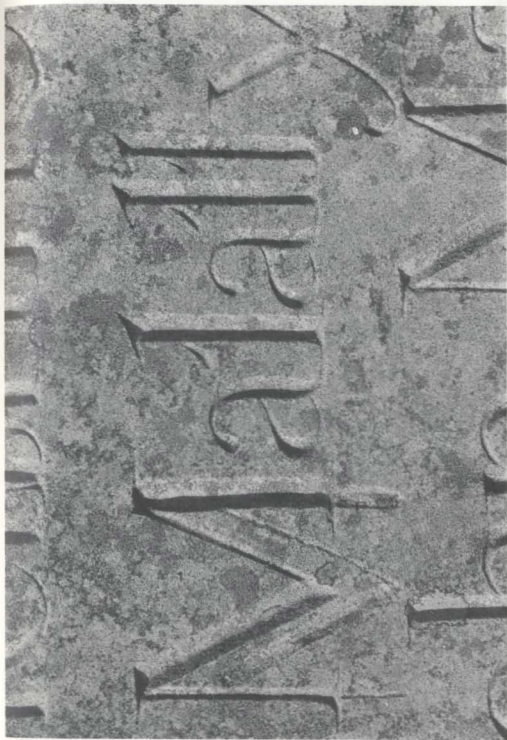
on maintaining balanced space among letters. In some cases, letters were faithfully copied, but irregular spacing indicated an unskilled carver. On a stone in Brigus (photograph 91) carved by Edward Rice, the letters no doubt were copied from a guide. The spacing among the letters, however, is quite irregular, and may have been carved by one of Rice's apprentices.

In the lettering of gravestones, mistakes were frequently made, and the correct letter was carved over the mistake. This practice reflects the value of the stone itself, and stones containing lettering mistakes could not merely be discarded. On a headstone from Brigus South (photograph 92), the carver apparently had difficulty in carving the surname, Malally. The "M" was originally carved in a lower position, and the heights of the "l"s were also low. Appropriate corrections were carved over these mistakes. When the craftsman carved this stone, he could not decide whether to begin the inscription with "Here lies" or "Here lieth" (photograph 93). He first carved "lieth", but then decided to change it to the more contemporary form "lies." He carved an "s" over the "h", but nothing could be done to remove the "t."

Purely decorative flourishes were often used to fill unused sections of a stone, and these designs were also taken from pattern books. A headstone in Brigus (photograph 94), for example, contains decorative designs on either side



Photograph 91. Uneven spacing between letters on a stone in Brigus.



Photograph 92. Lettering mistakes on a stone in Brigus South.



Photograph 93. Lettering mistakes on a stone in Brigus South.



Photograph 94. Decorative carving used to fill in space at the end of a line of verse on a stone in Brigus.

of the first line of the inscription.⁵²

The actual lettering styles used on gravestones recorded in Newfoundland were taken from printed books which contained examples of various styles. These books were used to insure a uniformity in lettering styles, eliminating most of the individual variation which might be present. Community residents could not dictate what types of letters were to be utilized on a marker. Instead, the carvers chose these styles, and were careful to produce letters which imitated the printed page. The specific form of the inscription which identified the deceased also maintained a uniform pattern, dictated again by the carver's own preferences and printed sources.

The earliest gravestones in Newfoundland usually contain the formula "Here lies the body of _____, who died _____, aged _____." By 1776, however, with the Peter Weston gravestone in Ferryland, a different formula appeared, "Sacred to the memory of _____," or "In memory of _____," and by the first decade of the nineteenth century all stones in Newfoundland used these formulas.⁵³ Church leaders in England who agitated for reforms in gravestone symbols also called for a change in the content of this inscription. They

⁵²For examples of these motifs see: Burgess, "English Sepulchral Monuments," 16 (1949), pp. 232-233.

⁵³For comments about this change in epitaph form in England see: Edward P. Gray, "A Remarkable Collection of 17th Century Gravestones," Monumental Journal, 23 (1956), p. 490.

felt that the former style emphasized death and the body, rather than the future life of the soul. By using the later formula, much of the finality of death was removed. This change found its way into pattern books and stone carving guides, and quickly replaced the older form.⁵⁴ The large number of church-approved pattern books which were published in the mid-nineteenth century often contained specific instructions on how the actual inscription should be arranged (figure 19).⁵⁵

Early Newfoundland gravestones carved in Ireland frequently contained a different formula of listing the name of the deceased and the date of death. A stone in Brigus, for example, reads:

Erected by
James A. Hearn
in memory of his wife
Mary A. Hearn alias Treacy
who departed this life
March the 22 1819
Aged 20 years

This stone, carved in the Waterford city area, first mentions the name of the person who erected the stone, and this form was common throughout eighteenth and nineteenth century Ireland and Scotland.⁵⁶ This form emphasized the contact that

⁵⁴For comments about this change in another region see: Angus K. Gillespie, "Gravestones and Ostentation: A Study of Five Delaware County Cemeteries," Pennsylvania Folklife, 19:2 (1969-70), pp. 34-43.

⁵⁵See: Robinson, Trade Secrets, pp. 13-16.

⁵⁶For comments about this form in Ireland and Scotland See: Vincent, In Search, p. 90.

Different Methods of Arranging
an Inscription.

IN MEMORY OF

RICHARD RAWLINSON,

WHOSE SOUL ENTERED ON THE ETERNAL WORLD JULY 6, 1856,

AGED 24 YEARS.

In Remembrance of

MARIA MARSHALL,

WHO CEASED TO SOJOURN ON EARTH, MAY 20, 1838,

AGED 16 YEARS.

IN FOND REMEMBRANCE OF

John Turner,

HIS SOUL QUITTED THIS GROSS EARTH, AND ENTERED THE REGIONS

OF IMMORTALITY, DECEMBER 13, 1850,

AGED 2 YEARS.

Figure 19. Instructions for arranging an inscription from one of Robinson's pattern books.

the living expressed with the dead through the erection of a grave marker. When gravestones began to be carved exclusively in Newfoundland in the 1830's, this form disappeared, and the "In memory" form became standard on all stones.

The inscription on the gravestone which listed the name of the deceased was one of the most important items of information carved on the stone since it identified the dead body beneath it. On the gravestone under this inscription, however, there was usually an area of unused space where additional information could be added. Early tombs within churches frequently contained poetic verses, or epitaphs, which discussed the past life of the deceased, or his future state. When gravestones began to be used, masons copied this practice by adding epitaphs under the name of the deceased and date of death.

The use of epitaphs on a gravestone provided the living with a channel through which they could express their desire to continue contact with the dead. Local residents could compose a verse which dealt specifically with the individual dead, expressing sorrow at death, or the belief in the continued existence of the deceased. Specific incidents in the life of the deceased could be mentioned, expressing even more this personal contact with the dead.

In spite of these possible methods of maintaining contact through the epitaph, this channel was almost completely controlled by external guidelines and patterns, and afforded

little opportunity for expressing this desire for contact.

Like so many other aspects of the gravestone, the epitaph was usually chosen from printed sources, containing the proper sentiments and beliefs. The epitaph used on a specific stone was chosen usually by the stone carver, or sometimes by the local clergyman. Local residents would rarely compose an epitaph for a gravestone, but rather would rely on the choice of these outside specialists.

The earliest epitaphs used by gravestone carvers most likely were taken from printed broadside elegies (see above, pp. 313-316). By the early eighteenth century, however, printed collections of epitaphs were being published which no doubt were borrowed by carvers. These early books were published as historical works; one writer, whose two volume collection was published in 1727, stated:

The Marble Pyramids and lofty Monuments may for some Time signify who lies there, but the wintry Edge of Time soon blasts these faithless Witnesses [gravestones] and bow's the Workmanship to perish with the Workman.⁵⁷

Through such printed collections, records of the past would hopefully be preserved.

By the end of the eighteenth century, however, collections of epitaphs were becoming common which emphasized the

⁵⁷ James Jones, Sepulchrorum Inscriptions: or, A Curious Collection of Above Nine Hundred of the Most Remarkable Epitaphs, Ancient and Modern, Serious and Merry; in the Kingdoms of Great Britain, Ireland, &c.: in English Verse, Faithfully Collected (Westminster: J. Chier, 1727), I, iv; for similar comments see: William Toldervy, Select Epitaphs (London: Owen, 1755), I, iv.

literary nature of their contents. One editor hoped that his collection would add to the previous work "in this humble department of Literature."⁵⁸ Epitaphs were removed from the graveyard, and now provided leisure reading material. The collecting of epitaphs became a hobby of the aristocracy, and one writer in the 1820's explained that "having always derived a particular pleasure from a walk among the tombs, I became in early life a collector of Epitaphs."⁵⁹ By the nineteenth century, numerous collections of epitaphs were being published, and many of the books contained large sections of humorous epitaphs which were often created by the editor, or borrowed from previous collections.⁶⁰

By 1791, however, collections of epitaphs were being printed for the specific use of the gravestone carver. The.

⁵⁸ T: Webb, A New Select Collection of Epitaphs: Panegyric and Moral, Humorous, Whimsical, Satyrical, and Inscriptive, Including the Most Remarkable Inscriptions in the Collections of Hacket, Jones, Toldervy; together with One Thousand Epitaphs Never Before Published (London: S. Bladon, 1775), I, [v].

⁵⁹ William Graham, A Collection of Epitaphs and Monumental Inscriptions, Ancient and Modern; with an Emblematical Frontispiece (2nd edition; London: T. and J. Allman, 1823), p. [iii].

⁶⁰ My working bibliography includes 124 epitaph collections published in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; for examples of humorous collections of epitaphs see: William Tegg, Epitaphs: Witty, Grotesque, Elegant &c. (London: William Tegg & Co., 1876), I owe this reference to Paul Smith; "Among the Tombs," Household Words, 17 (1858), pp. 372-375; "Epitaphs: Ancient and Modern," Chamber's Journal, 37 (1861), pp. 141-143; "Some Curious Epitaphs," Chamber's Journal, n.s.; 57 (1880), pp. 666-668.

preface of one of these books stated that:

The Want of a Book of original Epitaphs, formed on a New Plan, for the Use of those Artists who write or Engrave Epitaphs for the middle and lower Ranks of People, has long been complained of.⁶¹

This book not only contained a collection of epitaphs for use of the carver, it also specified which epitaphs should be used with particular symbols. For example, under "The Emblem a Flower" is listed:

The blooming Flow'r an Emblem shows
Of mortal Man's Decay;
Man, like a Flow'r, no sooner blows,
But fades and dies away.⁶²

The epitaphs found on gravestones recorded in Newfoundland, both the early markers carved in the British Isles, and the later types produced in St. John's, were chosen largely by the stone carver using these printed collections. One nineteenth century writer, commenting upon this practice in England, noted:

⁶¹ John Bowden, The Epitaph-Writer, Consisting of Upwards of Six Hundred Original Epitaphs, Moral, Admonitory, Humorous, and Satirical; Numbered, Classed, and Arranged, on a New Plan; Chiefly Designed for Those who Write or Engrave Inscriptions on Tomb-Stones; Part I Contains General Epitaphs of Two and Four Lines Each; Part II, Epitaphs on Various Characters and Relations in Life, as Fathers, Mothers, Husbands, Wives, Young Men, Infants, and a Great Variety of Moral and Religious Characters; Part III, Humorous and Satirical Epitaphs, Designed as Satires on Vice and Folly; to which Is Prefixed an Essay on Epitaph-Writing (Chester, Eng.: J. Fletcher, 1791), p. iii.

⁶² Bowden, Epitaph-Writer, p. 19; for the influence of this book on later printed epitaph collections see: Fritz Spiegl, A Small Book of Grave Humour (London: Pan Books Ltd., 1971), pp. iii-v.

And now, suppose the customer requires a few lines of poetry, and is no poet himself, the complaisant stonemason obviates the difficulty at once. He has a book full of epitaphs; and one of these, - grammar, spelling, and all - is, in a few weeks, transferred from the book to the stone :⁶³

One gravestone carver in Salisbury in England advertised his skill at composing epitaphs by posting a notice in his shop window which read:

John Hopkins, parish clerk and undertaker, sells epitaphs of all sorts at all prices. Shaves neat and plays by bassoon. Teeth drawn and the 'Salisbury Journal' read gratis every Sunday morning at eight. A school for psalmody every Thursday evening when my son, born blind, will play the fiddle. Specimen epitaph on my wife:

My wife ten years, not much to my
ease,
But now she is dead, 'in coelo quies'.

Great variety to be seen within. - Your humble servant, John Hopkins.⁶⁴

Early epitaphs found on Newfoundland gravestones, like the early symbols, stressed the mortality of man, and the brief nature of life. This finality of death was expressed in an epitaph, for example, on a headstone in Brigus, dated 1812:

⁶³ Rev. F.E. Paget, A Tract upon Tombstones, a Suggestion for the Consideration of Persons Intending to Set Up that Kind of Monument to the Memory of Deceased Friends (Rugby, Eng.: J.T. Walters, 1843), p. 17; for similar comments see: Eccles J. Carter, Remarks on Christian Gravestones, Illustrated with Working Drawings (London: J. Master, 1847), p. 15; Draper, Century of Broadside Elegies, p. xv.

⁶⁴ A.S. Macmillan, Somerset Epitaphs, First Series: Relations (London: Folk Press, 1924) - p. xviii.

Death like an overflowing stream
Sweeps us away our life's a Dream;
An empty Tale, a morning Flower
Cut down and wither'd in an hour. 65

Another stone in Brigus, dated 1825, speaks of a life of suffering:

Afflictions sore, long time I bore
Physicians art was vain
Till Death did seize, and God did ease
Me of my cruel pain. 66

⁶⁵ For versions from other regions see: William Ogden Wheeler, Inscriptions on Tombstones and Monuments in the Burying Grounds of the First Presbyterian Church and St. John's Church at Elizabeth, New Jersey, 1664-1892 (New Haven, Conn.: Press of Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor, 1892), pp. 138-139 #951; Joseph Barlow Robinson, Epitaphs, Collected from the Cemeteries of London Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull, Leicester, Sheffield, Manchester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Derby, &c.: with Original and Selected Epitaphs by Tennyson, Longfellow, Montgomery, Mrs. Hemans, Eliza Cook, Wordsworth, Robert Nicholl, Chas. Mackay, Milman, Mrs. Norton, J.E. Langley, Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. Barbauld, G.W. Longstaff, Alaric Watts, &c.: the Whole Collected and Arranged (London: Atchley, 1859), p. 162 #842.

⁶⁶ For examples from other regions see: Wheeler, Inscriptions, pp. 112 #775, 182 #1254, 188 #1302, 230 #1598, 242 #1687, 273 #1923; Janet Carnochan, Inscriptions and Graves in the Niagara Peninsula, Niagara Historical Society, No. 19 (Niagara-on-the-Lake: Niagara Advance Print, 1910), p. 89; Hanks, Early Ontario Gravestones, p. 22; Charles L. Wallis, Stories on Stone: A Book of American Epitaphs (New York: Oxford-University Press, 1954), p. 111; Thomas C. Mann and Janet Greene, Over Their Dead Bodies: Yankee Epitaphs and History (Brattleboro, Vt.: Stephen Greene Press, 1962), p. 56; Geoffrey Wright, Discovering Epitaphs (Aylesbury, Bucks.: Shire Publications, 1972), p. 11; Vincent, In Search, pp. 107-108; Ernest R. Suffling, Epitaphia: Being a Collection of 1300 British Epitaphs, Grave and Gay, Historical and Curious, Annotated with Biographical Notes, Anecdotes, etc., with an Introduction upon Modes of Burial and a General Survey of Interments in the British Isles from Mediaeval Times, together with an Account of Peculiar Interments, Church Folklore, and a Short Chapter on American Epitaphs (London:

One early epitaph, which stressed the theme of mortality, apparently entered into oral circulation,³ and has been extensively used throughout the British Isles and North America. This epitaph first appeared on the tomb of Edward, the Black Prince, in Canterbury, in 1376:

Whosoe thou be that passeth bye,
Where these Corpes interred lie,
Understand what I shall saye,
As at this Time speake I maye;
Such as thou art, sometyme was I
Such as I am, such shalt thou bee.

I little thought on the Houre of Death,
Soe long as I enjoyed Breath.
Greate Riches here I did possess,
Whereof I made great Noblenesse;
I had Gold Silver Wardrobe, and
Greate Treasures, Horses, Houses, Lande;

But now a Caitiffe Poore am I
Deepe in the Ground lo' here I lie!
My Beautye great is all quite gone,
My Fleshe is wasted to the Bone.

My House is narrow nowe and thronge,
Nothings but Truthe comes from my Tongue;
And if ye shoulde see mee this Daye,

L.U. Gill, 1909), p. 299; Paget, Tract upon Tombstones, p. 17; Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, p. 221; D.P. Penhallow, "Epithaphal Inscriptions," Journal of American Folklore, 5 (1892), p. 316; J.R. Kippax, Churchyard Literature: Choice Collection of American Epitaphs (Chicago: S.C. Griggs & Co., 1877), pp. 94, 100-101, 109; Marion C. Thompson, "Epitaphs," New York Folklore Quarterly, 4 (1948), p. 234; E.B.C., Over the Border: Acadia, the Home of 'Evangeline' (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1884), p. 76; Frederick Burgess, "Tablets of Ancestors: Gravestone Epitaphs and their Story," Monumental Journal, 30 (1963), p. 11; Andrew B. Stone, Edgar L. Ware and Wilfred M. Davis, Inscriptions on Gravestones in the Old Cemetery at Hancock, N.H. (Hancock, N.H.: n.p., 1911), pp. 32, 65, 94; James Robson, The Churches and Churchyards of Berwickshire (Kelso: J. & J.H. Rutherford, 1896), p. 107.

I do not thinke but ye wolde saye,
That I had never beene a Man;
So moche altered howe I am!

For God's sake, praye to the Heavenly Kinge,
That he my Soul to Heaven wolde bringe;
All theye that Preye and make Accorde
For mee, unto my God and Lorde,
God place them in this Paradice
Wherein noe wretched caitiffe lies. 67

By the eighteenth century, the first verse of this epitaph had begun to appear on gravestones, in a version resembling the form found on a stone in Brigus dated 1857;

Look on my Grave as you pass by
As you are now so once was I
As I am now so must you be
Prepare for Death and follow me.

In several instances during field work in Newfoundland, residents repeated this epitaph to me orally. The form of this epitaph is aesthetically pleasing, and is apparently recited on occasions quite removed from death. The widespread distribution of this epitaph in the British Isles and in North America indicates its spread orally;⁶⁸ and it was

⁶⁷Toldervy, Select Epitaphs, I, 6.

⁶⁸For versions see: Wheeler, Inscriptions, pp. 28 #179, 52 #354, 56 #379; 380, 60 #412, 153 #1056, 213 #1475, 215 #1495, 228 #1582, 233 #1624; 273 #1929, 331 #281; Carnochan, Inscriptions and Graves in the Niagara Peninsula, pp. 8, 88, 99; Hanks, Early Ontario Gravestones, pp. 20-21; Wallis, Stories on Stone, pp. 86-87; Mann, Over Their Dead Bodies, pp. 5-6; Tashjian, Memorials for Children of Change, pp. 245, 257; Thomas Bridgman, The Pilgrims and their Descendants: With an Introduction by Hon. Edward Everett, LL.D., also Inscriptions from the Monuments in the Granary Burial Ground, Tremont Street (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1856), pp. 160, 301; "Epitaphs and Names," Journal of American Folklore, 6

so well known that a parody verse has been reported:

Reader, pass on, ne'er waste your time
On bad biography and bitter rhyme

(1893), p. 149; Lewis Haberly, "Here Lies Schroom Lake," New York Folklore Quarterly, 18 (1962), p. 266; Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, p. 220; Paget, Tract upon Tombstones, p. 19; Webb, New Select Collection, I, 206, 248; Jones Sepulchrorum Inscriptiones, I, 203; Wright, Discovering Epitaphs, p. 10; Suffling, Epitaphia, p. 140; C.W.W. Elkin, "Remarks on Some Old Cemeteries of the Pittsburgh Region," Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, 37 (1955), p. 109; Wasserman, Gravestone Designs, p. 3; Lambert Florin, Tales the Western Tombstones Tell (New York: Bonanza Books, 1967), p. 76; Kippax, Churchyard Literature, pp. 67, 69, 71-72, 77, 80; Lindley, Of Graves, p. 160; Walter Henry Howe, Here Lies: Being a Collection of Ancient and Modern, Humorous and Queer Inscriptions from Tombstones (New York: New Amsterdam Book Co., 1901), pp. 6-7; Robinson, Epitaphs, p. 17; Burgess, "Tablets of Ancestors," p. 11; Margaret G. Aldred, "Kent Churches and their Memorials," Monumental Journal, 19 (1952), p. 724; John A. Henderson, Aberdeenshire Epitaphs and Inscriptions with Historical, Biographical, Genealogical, and Antiquarian Notes (Aberdeen: Aberdeen Daily Journal Office, 1907), p. 131; Edward Doubleday Harris, A Copy of the Old Epitaphs in the Burying Ground of Block Island, R.I. (Cambridge, Mass.: n.p., 1883), p. 54; Thomas F. Ravenshaw, Antiente Epitaphes: (From A.D. 1250 to A.D. 1800), Collected and Sett Forth in Chronological Order (London: Joseph Masters & Co., 1878), pp. 88, 146, 158; Rev. Timothy Alden, A Collection of American Epitaphs and Inscriptions with Occasional Notes (New York: S. Marks, Printer, 1814), I, 186, II, 75; Benjamin Drew, Burial Hill, Plymouth, Massachusetts: Its Monuments and Gravestones Numbered and Briefly Described, and the Inscriptions and Epitaphs Thereon Carefully Copied (Plymouth, Mass.: Avery & Doten, 1894), pp. 108, 227; Jane Kimberley, "Neighbors: Lore of Worcester, Mass.," New York Folklore Quarterly, 10 (1954), p. 65; George Macdonald, "Post-Reformation Tombstones in the Cathedral Churchyard, St. Andrews," Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, ser. 6, 10, (1935-36), pp. 71, 77; Frederick Burgess, "Epitaphs: Their Nature and Development," Monumental Journal, 28 (1961), p. 83; Needham, "Old English Headstones," 20 (1953), pp. 588, 590; David B. Knight, Cemeteries as Living Landscapes (Ottawa: Ontario Genealogical Society, 1973), p. 22; Thomas J. Hannion, Jr., "Nineteenth Century Cemeteries in Central-West Pennsylvania," Pioneer American Society, Proceedings, 2 (1973), p. 36; William Henry Beable, Epitaphs,

For what I am this cumbrous clay insures,
And what I was, is no affair of yours⁶⁹

In spite of the widespread oral circulation of this epitaph, which is found even today, its use was severely restricted. In fact, all such epitaphs which speak of the mortality of man are now rarely used. This change in the content of the epitaph was due to the nineteenth century reform movement led by clergymen in England to "Christianize" the gravestone. This movement completely altered the content of Newfoundland epitaphs.

As was also the case with gravestone symbols, clergymen in England began to complain of the non-Christian

Graveyard Humour and Eulogy (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1925), pp. 37, 40, 50; Barbara Jones, Design for Death (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1967), p. 148; Walter Muir Whitehill, "Inscriptions on Tomb-Stones in the Old Burying Ground at North Andover, Massachusetts," Essex Institute, Historical Collections, 89 (1952), p. 122 #161; Stone, Inscriptions, pp. 16, 31, 46, 48, 51, 79, 86, 87, 111; Robson, Churches and Churchyards, p. 161; for a discussion of the origins of this epitaph see: D. Gray, "A Middle-English Epitaph," Notes and Queries, n.s., 8 (1961), pp. 132-135.

⁶⁹ For examples see: A Collection of Epitaphs and Monumental Inscriptions, Historical, Biographical, Literary, and Miscellaneous (London: Lackington, Allen & Co., 1806), II, 59; Suffling, Epitaphia, pp. 119-116; "On Epitaphs and Elegiac Inscriptions," Dublin University Magazine, 40 (1852), p. 210; Arnold Silcock, Verse and Worse (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), p. 128; Kippax, Churchyard Literature, p. 85; Ravenshaw, Antient Epitaphs, p. 176; Marvin G. Williams, "'Let's Talk of Graves and Worms and Epitaphs,'" New Hampshire Profiles, 18:4 (1967), p. 34; Burgess, "Epitaphs: Their Nature and Development," 28 (1961), p. 100; Beable, Epitaphs, p. 35; Susan D. Safford, Quaint Epitaphs (Boston: A.J. Ochs & Co., 1900), p. 23.

sentiment of these epitaphs which spoke of death, rather than of future life. One church leader, for example, wrote:

As to the doggrel rhymes of which these common epitaphs consist, all I can say is, that if we were not unhappily used to them, I think we should blush to find it possible that people calling themselves Christians should set up such things, in which there is hardly ever an expression which exhibits the Christian feelings of reverence and devotion: . . . 70

Around the mid-nineteenth century, collections of epitaphs written by clergymen began to be published, and the church attempted to censor the type of epitaphs used on local grave-stones.⁷¹ Epitaphs now had to stress the Christian beliefs of life after death and the final resurrection of the body. Various epitaphs in the Newfoundland regions surveyed express these themes. A stone in Harbour Grace, dated 1820, spoke of

⁷⁰ Paget, A Tract upon Tomb-Stones, pp. 18-19; also see: Kelke, Churchyard Manual, pp. 60-64; also see: Benjamin Richings, A General Volume of Epitaphs, Original and Selected: With a Large Selection of Striking and Appropriate Texts of Scripture and an Historical and Moral Essay on the Subject (London: Parker and Son, 1840), pp. lxvi-lxvii.

⁷¹ For an example of a local clergyman in England requiring that epitaphs be submitted to him for approval before their use on gravestones see: Rev. Luke Booker, Tributes to the Dead: Consisting of More than Two Hundred Epitaphs, Many of Them Original Compositions, Suitable for Persons of All Ages and Circumstances (London: J. Hatchard & Son, 1830), p. viii; Gibbs, Series of Designs, p. 11; Smith, Original Designs, p. 16; Suffling, Epitaphia, p. 15; in the West Country, local burial boards were set up to control gravestone designs and epitaphs, and gravestone carvers had to submit drawings of each gravestone and its epitaph for approval; for examples see: Dorset County Record Office, B3/CP1.

the eternal happiness of a small child:

This Lovely bud so young and fair
 Call'd hence by early doom
 Just came to show how sweet a flower
 In Paradise would bloom.⁷²

An epitaph in Brigus, dated 1854, pointed to the resurrection of the dead, who are now only sleeping:

My flesh shall slumber in the ground
 Till the last trumpets awful sound
 Then burst the bonds with sweet surprise
 And in my Saviour's image rise.⁷³

Like the epitaphs concerning mortality before them, these epitaphs containing Christian statements were printed in books that received a widespread distribution among English stone

⁷² For other examples see: Lindley, Of Graves, p. 154; "Epitaphs," Chamber's Journal, 46 (1869), p. 124; R.L. Brown, A Book of Epitaphs (New York: Taplinger, 1967), p. 17; Suffling, Epitaphia, p. 196; Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, p. 222; Kippax, Churchyard Literature, p. 93; Aldred, "Kent Churches," p. 724; Drew, Burial Hill, p. 34; Burgess, "Epitaphs: Their Nature and Development," 28 (1961), p. 83; Alvin W. Schillinger, "Hell's Bells and Panther Tracks: Lore of Western Sullivan County," New York Folklore Quarterly 9 (1953), p. 38; R.W.P. Cockerton, Some Interesting and Unusual Inscriptions in All Saints' Church and Churchyard, Bakewell (3rd ed.; Chesterfield: Wilfred Edmunds Ltd., 1966), p. 11; Thomas J. Pettigrew, Chronicles of the Tombs: A Select Collection of Epitaphs, Preceded by an Essay on Epitaphs and Other Monumental Inscriptions, with Incidental Observations on Sepulchral Antiquities (London: H.G. Bohn, 1857), p. 440; Wheeler, Inscriptions, pp. 93 #637, 98 #675, 163 #1127, 181 #1245, 222 #1538, 236-237 #1644, 242 #1685, 305 #95, 305 #99; Stone, Inscriptions, 55, 59, 103, 115.

⁷³ For other versions see: Wheeler, Inscriptions, pp. 40 #255, 89 #611, 98 #679, 237 #1645; Tashjian, Memorials for Children of Change, pp. 261-262; Bridgman, Pilgrims, p. 177; Drew, Burial Hill, pp. 108, 223, 233, 240, 279, 292; Stone, Inscriptions, pp. 63, 76, 79, 85.

carvers, and were adopted by the St. John's masons when their craft became established on the island. As before, the living did not compose these epitaphs, rather, they could be chosen by local residents from the carver's books, or actually by the carver himself.

A lengthy epitaph appeared on a headstone in Bareneed, dated 1852:

Blame not the monumental stone we raise
Tis to the Saviour's not the creatures praise
Sin was the whole that she could call her own
Her goodness all deriv'd from Him alone
To sin her conflicts pens and griefs she ow'd
Her conqu'ring [sic] faith and patience He
 bestow'd
Reader may'st thou obtain like precious faith
To smile in anguish and rejoice in death

In 1856, J.C. Hare published a collection of epitaphs for use in country churchyards, and in this book he included the above epitaph, and stated that it appeared in an Olney churchyard in Buckinghamshire.⁷⁴ Hare's version is identical to the Bareneed example; in fact, Hare lists a shortened form of the word conquering, "conqu'ring." Apparently when this epitaph was copied from some printed source by the St. John's

⁷⁴J.C. Augustus Hare, Epitaphs for Country Churchyards, Collected and Arranged (Oxford: Parker and Co., 1856), p. 40; Hare's book was bound in a solemn black cover, resembling a prayer book. It even contained a thin ribbon to mark pages as many prayer books have. For other versions of this epitaph see: Robinson, Epitaphs, pp. 52-53; Robert Orchard, A New Select Collection of Epitaphs, Designed as a Continuation to Hackett and Webb, and Brought Down to the Present Time (London: author, 1813), pp. 77-78; I would like to thank Paul Smith for providing me with a microfilm copy of Orchard's book.

carver, he omitted the apostrophe.

Even today, epitaphs used on gravestones are chosen from printed sources, though local residents usually make the choice. These printed verses are provided by the stone carver himself,⁷⁵ or in books owned by the local clergyman,⁷⁶ as in the past. The actual printed epitaph that was chosen, however, was limited by economic factors, and longer verses would cost more money. Like the use of a gravestone itself, the use of long epitaphs seemed to be a sign of high social and economic status. The length of epitaphs used on the gravestones between 1730 and 1860 that were recorded in this study will indicate this use.

When an inscription was carved on a stone, masons charged by the number of letters, and the longer the inscription, the more expensive the total cost of the stone. Verses that were carved on the stones usually consisted of four lines. The epitaphs of the gravestones that were recorded in this study are listed by number of lines in Table 4. These epitaphs are listed by decade, and also by denomination. Several trends are evident from this data. Roman Catholic stones rarely had rhymed verse found on the stones of the other denominations. After the name and date of death, Roman Catholic stones would usually add only a prayer for the dead,

⁷⁵For examples see: MUNFLA Q74B-13-7; Q74B-14-7.

⁷⁶See: MUNFLA Q74B-24-7.

such as "May he rest in peace, Amen," or "Requiescat in pace, Amen." This pattern is found on most of the early Irish stones used in Newfoundland, and was continued by the St. John's carvers until the late nineteenth century. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, Roman Catholic epitaphs were quite similar to those of other denominations, indicating the increased control of the gravestone carvers over the form of epitaphs.

The length of epitaphs on Anglican stones was usually not more than four lines, quite a contrast to the lengthy verses that apparently were used on the Methodist stones. Several factors may explain the use of lengthy epitaphs by Methodists. The Methodist liturgy stressed a great amount of singing, besides Bible readings and preaching. The emphasis placed on hymn-singing would provide a constant exposure to various types of rhymed verse, and this rhymed verse could naturally lead to a preference for religious poetry. One of the gravestones in Cupids, for example, contains a verse from one of Wesley's hymns.

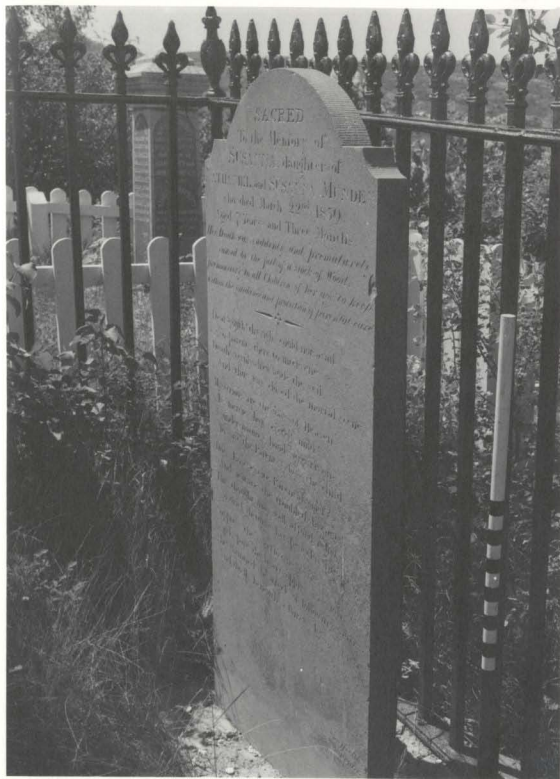
Perhaps even more than Methodism's emphasis on verse was the economic factor which explains to a great extent the number of lines that appeared on the Methodist gravestones. Most of the Methodist stones that were recorded were located in Brigus. Brigus was the center of the sealing industry in Newfoundland during the first part of the nineteenth century,

and was an exceptionally prosperous port.⁷⁷ This economic prosperity enabled the Methodists in Brigus to purchase gravestones containing many lines of verse. By comparing the size of the Methodist gravestones and the number of verses to the Roman Catholic and Anglican types in the community, the wealth of the Methodists in the past is apparent. By purchasing stones that contained more lines of verse, the Methodists could visually indicate their higher financial status in the community. Anglicans would be especially aware of this ostentation, since their church and burial ground was located adjacent to that of the Methodists. Many of the verses on these stones seem to have been chosen from collections of four-line epitaphs, and were placed together in order to provide the number of lines determined by the amount of money the family paid. For example, on a stone dated 1830 (photograph 95), four verses were carved:

Dear Youth thy sighs could not avail
 No parents there to intervene,
 Death sternly drew aside the veil
 And thus was closed the mortal scene.

Mysterious are the ways of Heaven
 Its mercies How severely mild!
 Asunder nature's bonds are riven -
 To save the Parents - slays the child.

⁷⁷ For comments about Brigus' leading role in the seal fishery see: D.W. Prowse, A History of Newfoundland from the English Colonial, and Foreign Records (London: Macmillan & Co., 1895), p. 451.



Photograph 95. Gravestone in Brigus containing sixteen lines of verse. This stone was carved in Poole.

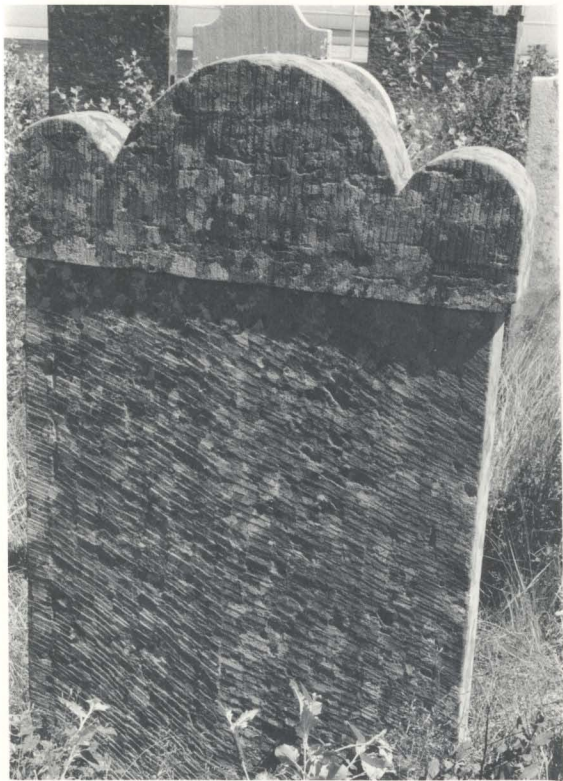
Does Love excite Parental grief?
 And agitate the troubled breast?
 This thought may well afford relief -
 No grief disturbs her peaceful breast.

Suppress the overflowing tears
 And spare the heart oppressive sigh
 She shunned the wreck of following years
 And dwells beneath a fairer sky.

These verses could exist independently, and do not smoothly flow into one another. When the living purchased a stone containing this type of epitaph, they were most likely aware that a large number of lines of epitaph would indicate to other community members their privileged economic status. The living may have also purchased this amount of verse in order to express their contact with the dead, and the sorrow at their loss. If more money were spent, the loss might appear greater.

The backs of most headstones were left unfinished, or roughly dressed by the carver (see photograph 96 for an example). Apparently the backs of headstones faced away from the actual body, and any information contained on this surface would not be connected directly with the deceased. The living had to be able to view both the stone and the grave where the specific body was buried.

In summary, when each gravestone was created for use in Newfoundland, its surface was inscribed with particular words and symbols which would connect that stone with the individual dead person whose grave it marked. The creation of these surface inscriptions could enable the living to



Photograph 96. Rough surface of the back of a gravestone in Brigus.

express their desire to maintain contact with the dead. In spite of this possible means of contact, this channel has always been largely controlled by external specialists, and has provided little real contact.

Gravestone shapes, symbols, lettering styles, word order, and epitaphs could all be created by local residents in their desire to express this contact. In almost all gravestones used in Newfoundland, however, printed sources have largely dictated the surface inscription of the stone, and the actual choice from these sources was often made by the stone mason or the clergyman. Symbol and epitaph forms could change rapidly with this external control with little objection from community residents. These residents accepted these changes, apparently aware that the markings on the surface of the gravestone were largely decorative, and depended upon the amount of money that was used in purchasing the marker.

This last channel of contact of the living with the dead provided little opportunity for personal expressions by the living. Designs and epitaphs, like the construction of the gravestone itself, were controlled by external specialists who rarely had a knowledge of the deceased, and who were producing a commercial object. The design of the gravestone surface would never provide the living with a viable channel to express their desire to maintain contact with the dead of the community, and, unlike any other channel,

it was controlled from the very Beginning by external norms
and guidelines..

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS

When death occurs in a Newfoundland community, the social system is altered and a person who has had a specific role in the community has been removed. The structure of a particular family is changed, and the economic or political organization of the community also changes. When a death occurs, some type of social readjustment is necessary so that social life can function without the deceased member. The disruptiveness of death in each community must be lessened in order that a gradual, rather than abrupt social change can take place. Although death quickly removes a community member, there is a need for the living to make the impact of this removal gradual.

Customs and practices connected with death and the actual burial attempt to gradually remove one community member from the local social life. A wake is held in many outports in order that the living can symbolically bid farewell to the dead, especially if death was sudden or took place away from the community. Eating and drinking can take place at the wake, in part to enable the living to share one last meal in the presence of the deceased. With the actual burial, however, contact does not cease.

Since most wakes are rarely longer than three days, this short amount of time is not sufficient to gradually remove a community member from local social life. In order to provide this gradual transition which is psychologically necessary, the living now focus their contact with the dead on the place of burial.

Residents are not removed from their community after death, but usually are buried in the ground somewhere within the community. Although the actual body has been covered, the presence of the community member is still indicated by his place of burial, and the living can acknowledge this presence through artifactual and customary contact. By an awareness of the existence of the dead at the place of burial, the dead are removed gradually rather than swiftly from the community.

This study has focused on the contact of the living with the dead at the place of burial in particular communities in eastern Newfoundland, describing various levels that the living can use to express this contact. Emphasis has been on the contact of the living with the dead, yet, in a certain sense, communication really occurs in both directions.

Community residents frequently believe that the dead also maintain contact with the living at the place of burial. The dead are thought to have the power to return, and are often seen at their grave. The dead can help the living by revealing the existence of treasure, foretelling the future,

or assuring the living of their present happiness. At the same time, however, the dead can cause harm by disturbing the daily life of the living. The anger of the dead is often brought about by actions of the living that have occurred at the place of burial.

This study has examined both diachronically and synchronically six specific channels through which the living can express their desire to maintain contact with the dead. A synchronic study of these channels would be incomplete without the diachronic aspect. The living could have used most of these channels to express their contact with the dead in the past, but in most cases each channel has now become institutionalized by external controls, and its viability has been reduced.

During the period of early settlement, local residents could decide where the place of burial should be located within each community. In most cases, the cemetery was placed within the living space of the community, in order to signify that the dead were still part of that community. The visual presence of the cemetery could also remind the living of the presence of community members who were now dead.

The living could choose a place of burial influenced by their desire to please the dead and thus prevent their return. A cemetery could be located on a hill where the dead might be closer to God, or they could be buried overlooking the sea, the source of their livelihood. In most Newfoundland

communities, these three characteristics could easily be combined, and early cemeteries were usually placed on hills overlooking the sea within the community.

When clergymen arrived in most communities in the early 1800's, these traditions changed. The churches established specific burial places according to their own laws and traditions. In some cases, the place of burial was located around the church building, while in others, it was removed totally from the community. No longer could the living express their desire to maintain contact with the dead through the choice of the location of the place of burial.

Each community could decide what social relationships that existed in life should be maintained in death, and the living hoped to please the dead by providing a similar social structure for the dead that existed in life. Thus, in many communities in the Conception Bay region, the religious and social conflict which was present in life was reflected in the choice of the place of burial. Religious divisions in life were extensive, and community members who were separated in life were now kept apart in death through the use of numerous burial grounds throughout the community. On the Southern Shore, on the other hand, religious and social strife was apparently rare, and all community members were buried in one common cemetery located in the midst of the community. Cooperation which apparently existed in life was reflected in the grouping together of the dead in one common cemetery.

The arrival of local clergymen quickly eliminated the choice by the living of a burial pattern which would reflect a specific social pattern. Instead, all members of one religious denomination had to be buried together in one specific place, often designated as sacred ground by the church. If the living wanted the dead to achieve proper rest and happiness, they now had to bury them in consecrated ground. The church could therefore regulate most aspects of burial.

Through the choice of how graves should be grouped together, and the orientation of the grave in relation to the cardinal points of the compass, the living were also able to express their contact with the dead. Orientation in Newfoundland communities was initially determined by local traditions, and could occur in any direction. With the arrival of the churches, however, grave orientation was standardized, and burials had to take place on an east-west axis.

Graves could also be grouped together in a specific order which would maintain social relationships which existed in life. The dead were grouped together in family plots, providing a social structure with which they would be familiar. By burying the dead with their closest relatives, the living could express their desire to please the dead, and provide a place of rest.

The construction of a permanent object which marked an individual grave and identified the dead would also permit the living to express their desire to maintain contact with

the dead. The design and construction of this marker, usually a gravestone, would indicate that the living were concerned with specifically marking the place of burial and signify their continued acknowledgement of the existence of the dead.

In Newfoundland, however, the actual construction of the grave marker, usually a gravestone, was carried out not by local residents who knew the deceased, but by craftsmen who lived in a society greatly separated from the local Newfoundland community. Gravestones used in Newfoundland were initially made in the British Isles, and even when a stone-carving tradition developed in St. John's, local markers were rarely made. Community residents purchased gravestones from St. John's craftsmen, and had no part to play in the actual construction.

The use of a gravestone itself was largely an economic symbol, rather than a viable means through which the living could express their desire to maintain contact with the dead. The earliest gravestones in Newfoundland were purchased by the local merchants or governmental officials, the only community members who could afford a professionally-carved stone. Even the type of stone that these residents purchased was limited by economic factors. Only small headstones were purchased, since shipping costs from the British Isles had to be added to the cost of the gravestone. A cheaper variety of stone was also frequently used, south Devon limestone, rather

than the more expensive Portland varieties.

The actual carvings that were placed on the gravestone could also permit the living to indicate their desire to maintain contact with the dead. These carvings took the form of an epitaph, symbol and lettering style, and their creation could provide a visual indication of the thoughts and beliefs of the living. In most cases, however, the epitaph, symbol and lettering style were created not by local residents, but rather by the stone carver in the British Isles or in St. John's. Printed patterns were frequently used by these craftsmen, and epitaphs were often taken from printed collections. The lack of local control on gravestone inscriptions is evident in the rapid changes that took place in epitaph content and symbol design during the beginning of the nineteenth century. Each abrupt change was met with little opposition, and one style rapidly replaced another. Local residents would choose gravestone designs from the catalogues of the carvers, and a section of the same catalogue would contain a long list of epitaphs. The inscription on the gravestone did not provide the living with a viable means of expressing contact with the dead, and only one channel affords this contact today--the decoration of the surface of the grave.

The burial of a community resident in a grave produces a section of ground which is directly associated with the body of the deceased. The surface of the grave takes on many attributes once connected with the former community resident.

Visits are made to the individual grave, and these replace the social interchange which previously would have occurred.

The grave surface can be decorated by the living, providing a visual indication of both their acceptance of the person's death and the desire to continue some form of contact with him. Special grave borders can be constructed in order to warn the living not to disturb a particular grave and the person buried in it.

Through the planting of flowers on the grave, and the placement of objects on its surface, the living could attempt to please the dead by providing them with objects pleasing to them. If flowers were considered desirable in life, then their presence should bring happiness to the dead. Each summer, local residents clean and decorate graves, and visits to specific family members are common. In most communities, an annual day is set aside when the church holds a religious service within the cemetery, and time is spent cleaning and decorating the cemetery for this event.

The decoration of the grave surface, and the customs connected with it, provide the only viable channel through which the living can indicate individually their contact with the dead. In all other channels surveyed in this study, external economic and religious specialists have codified the means of expression, and the living follow these external guidelines. Grave decorating practices, however, have not been institutionalized, and residents are able to observe

local traditions and personal preferences. Only through this one level are the living able to express their desire to maintain contact with the dead, and thus lessen the social disruptiveness of death.

The viability of this channel of contact in Newfoundland can be explained only through the diachronic-synchronic approach used in this study. In the past, many levels of contact of the living with the dead were possible. With the arrival of local churches and the economic development of the island, many of the channels of contact became codified, thus reducing their viability. The grave decorating tradition, however, never experienced this external control, and today provides the living with the only remaining channel of contact with the dead at the place of burial.

In other areas of the West, the expression of contact by the living with the dead at the place of burial is no longer possible through any type of artifactual and customary contact. This lack of individual contact brings about a denial of the existence of the dead at the place of burial, and ironically increases the social disruptiveness of death.

The first attempts to reduce the contact of the living with the dead at the place of burial occurred in England with the church campaigns of the nineteenth century to standardize gravestone designs and inscriptions, at the same time prohibiting any form of grave decoration. In the twentieth century in England, cemeteries and churchyards began to be

cleared of all markers, removing all indication of the presence of the dead. These clearances, such as the Anglican churchyard at Teignmouth, Devon (photograph 97), were justified by the need for free space within cities, and the place of burial was quickly transformed into a park.

The most extreme form of this elimination of expression of contact of the living with the dead at the place of burial has occurred in North America with the creation of memorial parks. These cemeteries contain no visible markings on the individual grave, and this new form of the place of burial

... is not the locus of a cult; it does not pretend to be. It is a place where one aspect of death - the disposal of the corpse - is promptly and efficiently taken care of. It is, to use Max Sorre's elegant phrase, a place of elimination.¹

These memorial gardens attempt to remove all indications of the existence of death, and hence only intensify the social and psychological trauma when it occurs.

In Newfoundland, however, this study indicates that one channel of individual contact of the living with the dead remains. The viability of many channels has been reduced, but the dead still remain part of most communities largely through the practices of grave decoration. The continued acceptance of the role of the dead in many communities has been accompanied by a continued acceptance of death itself, unlike so many other regions of the Western world. As long as one

¹J.B. Jackson, "The Vanishing Epitaph: From Monument to Place," Landscape, 17:2 (1967-68), p. 26.



Photograph 97. Cleared Anglican churchyard in Teignmouth.

channel exists through which the living can express their desire to maintain contact with the dead, the dead will play a very real role in the local community, serving a necessary social and psychological function. The place of burial will remain more than a place of disposal, and the existence of death will continue to remain only one out of many facets of community life, not only expected, but completely accepted.

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on Various Characters and Relations in Life, as Fathers, Mothers, Husbands, Wives, Young Men, Infants, and a Great Variety of Moral and Religious Characters; Part III, Humorous and Satirical Epitaphs, Designed as Satires on Vice and Folly; to which is Prefixed an Essay on Epitaph-Writing. Chester, Eng.: J. Fletcher, 1791.

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APPENDIX
GRAVESTONE AND CEMETERY QUESTIONNAIRE.

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLANDDEPARTMENT OF FOLKLORE

There is very little information available about the old gravestones and cemeteries in Newfoundland. Each community usually has an old cemetery where the early settlers were buried. By answering the following questions, you can help piece together some of the evidence of the early history, settlement and burial in the Province.

The answers to some of the questions will be obtained from the gravestones themselves, simply by reading the name, date and verses. This should take very little time, and will provide both of us with a historical record of your community.

If you are not able to return to your community, perhaps you can send these questions home to someone who would be willing to answer them. The answers can be sent directly to the Department of Folklore.

Please answer each question fully, giving details whenever possible. Write the answers in the spaces provided. If you need more space, and want to add some further comment, use separate sheets of paper. Number these extra pages in the upper right hand corner. If possible, please use ink. All information will be permanently filed in the Folklore and Language Archive and will be held in strictest confidence. No names will be used in any publication without the consent of both you and the person providing the information.

YOUR NAME:

BIRTH DATE:

HOME COMMUNITY:

PRESENT ADDRESS:

RELIGION:

TODAY'S DATE:

1. Where did the original settlers in your community come from?
2. What are the religious denominations that are found in your home community? Please list them all.
3. If there is more than one denomination in your community, does each have its own cemetery?
Has this always been the case? If not, explain.
4. Are there cemeteries in your community that are no longer used? If so, please give details of location, name, etc.
5. Are there cemeteries in your community located in out-of-the-way places? Describe briefly where these are located.
6. Are the cemeteries in your community always cared for? If so, in what ways?

7. Are there special days set aside for cleaning the cemetery? If so, describe when this occurs, special services that occur, and how the cemetery is prepared for this day.

8. Are the graves in the cemetery decorated? If so, please describe the normal decorations, such as the placing of rocks or shells around the border, putting flowers on the grave, etc.

9. Are there cemeteries or small burial plots located in or near your community that contain no markers? If so, please give details of the location, name of the area, etc.

Who is buried there?

10. Were people ever buried in a garden, meadow, small family plot, or other place apart from the larger cemeteries? Please give location and any other details.

The remaining questions deal specifically with the cemetery of your own denomination. Information concerning this cemetery and its gravestones should be the easiest for you to obtain. If you are familiar with other denominations in your community, any information you can give about their gravestones and cemeteries will be very helpful. This extra information can be given on additional sheets of paper.

11. What are the stones that mark the grave called in your community? (gravestones, headstones, tombstones, markers, monuments, some other name.)
12. What are the oldest gravestones in the cemetery? (Please give the name on the stone and the date of death. The more dates you can give, the better, especially of gravestones dated before 1860.
13. Do you know whether these are the oldest gravestones in your community?
14. How many gravestones are in the cemetery dated before 1860?
15. What is the colour of these gravestones?
16. Do any of the older people in your community remember having gravestones sent from England, Ireland, or elsewhere outside the Province? If so, please give details of where the stones came from, and the dates when they arrived. Give your informant's name, age, community, religion, and relationship to you.

17. Are there any reports of markers being made by a local resident? If so, please give details of construction, such as who made the marker, the materials used, how it was made, etc.
18. Were wooden markers ever placed on a grave? Are they still being used now? Describe these markers, giving shape, colour, how the inscriptions were placed on the marker, and the approximate dates when these markers were used.
19. What are the typical shapes of the older gravestones found in the cemetery. Please draw an outline of the typical shapes in the space below, or on separate sheets. Give the date of each gravestone copied.

20. Were there verses that were used over and over again on gravestones? If so, please give these verses.
21. Did anyone in your community have a list, either written or printed, that contained verses that were used on gravestones? If so, please give the name of this person, age, occupation and religion. Briefly describe this list, its contents, and where it was obtained.
22. Please write down any unusual gravestone verses which you see in the cemetery. Include the name and date of the stone from which they come.
23. Many gravestones have a cross, heart, hands or some other type of symbol at the top. Who decided which symbol would be placed on the stone? Where did these symbols come from?

24. What typical symbols are used on the gravestones in the cemetery? Please make simple drawings of these symbols and designs in the space below, and include the name and date of the stone from which they are copied.
25. Do older people remember old gravestones in your community that are no longer there? If so, how old were these stones, and what happened to them?
26. Are there any gravestones which contain strange writing, symbols or marks? If so, please describe and provide a drawing.
27. What direction(s) do the gravestones in the cemetery face? (mainly east, west, etc., or in all directions.)

28. Are there gravestones which seem unusual? (For example, a large size, strange colour or shape, etc. If so, please provide details.)

29. Are there burial vaults in the cemetery? If so, please describe them. Who is buried there?

30. Where are the gravestones obtained now? Who makes them?

31. Are there stones marking graves within your church? If so, please describe these markers.

Who is buried there?

32. Does anyone in your community have photographs of gravestones found in the local cemetery? If so, please provide name, address, age, occupation and religion.

33. Please add any further information which you think may be helpful. This may include stories about particular stones or cemeteries, accounts of burials, people buried in an unusual way or place, etc.

